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A

CHAPTER IN AUTOBIOGRAPHY,

EMBRACING

THE HALF-YEAR PRECEDING AND THE HALF-YEAR FOLLOWING

18TH MAY, 1843.

BY

ALEX. BEITH, D.D.

GAUDENT, SECURI, NARRARE PERICULA NAUTÆ.

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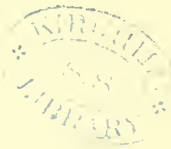

PREFACE.

SOME years ago the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland appointed a Committee, designated "A Committee on Records of Disruption Ministers." Of this Committee Mr. Thomas Brown, minister of Dean Church, Edinburgh, is the present Convener.

At the meeting of the Assembly, 1876, Mr. Brown laid on the table a volume entitled "ANNALS OF THE DISRUPTION; consisting chiefly of Extracts from Autograph Narratives of Ministers who left the Scottish Establishment in 1843." The work was very favourably received, and authority was given for its publication. It is marked PART I., "additional statements and records from all who can supply authentic information as to Disruption times" being earnestly invited.

The present volume owes its origin to this invitation.

In extending my statement I did not anticipate that my friend the Convener, who with such ability

and success prosecutes the work which has been intrusted to him by the Church, would adopt or embody in his compilation my whole production. I expected only that he might employ the fruit of my pen in some form, the extent to which he might do so being left to his judgment.

Mr. Brown, after carefully perusing my MS., gave as his opinion that it should be published entire, as a separate though auxiliary contribution in aid of his labours. Other friends also, on reading what I had written, recommended separate publication.

For my part, I feel honoured in being permitted an opportunity to help in perpetuating the remembrance of the EXODUS of the Church of Scotland in 1843, believing that it constitutes an outstanding event in the history of the Christian Church, affecting the interests of true religion not in our country only but in Christendom generally.

A. B.

EDINBURGH, *May*, 1877.

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MEMORIES OF DISRUPTION TIMES.

INTRODUCTORY.

Close of the Conflict of the Church of Scotland with the Civil Courts — Expectations disappointed — Sir Robert Peel's Government — The officials in Scotland — Sense of wrong and oppression at the hands of the Church's enemies — Law Decisions — Their effects — Cry for action in defence, issuing in the CONVOCATION — Issues of the Convocation — Proceedings following thereon — Deputations to all parts of the country — The agitation created thereby — The present work to illustrate the proceedings of one of the appointed Deputations and the agitation generally.

IF the present generation do not readily realize the distress which came upon the friends of religion in our Scottish Church in 1842, and if they do not much sympathize with the survivors of the sufferers of that time, we ought not greatly to wonder, though we may be excused for regretting that such should be the case.

The ten years' conflict was approaching its close. Little more could be done in fighting our battle for spiritual liberty. Satisfied that we were triumphant in argument, we were made painfully

conscious of defeat through pure physical power—the power of legal decrees. Accepting such defeat, we, as necessary in the existing circumstances, asked an armistice, and we declared our object in doing so. We desired, by direct application to Government, which we had made, to ascertain the view of our case entertained by our civil authorities—their decision, as representing the country, of constitutional law as affecting us—yea or nay, whether the proceedings of the law courts, in as far as they had given judgment in our cause, were to be homologated—yea or nay, whether the country was to allow or whether it was to disallow the liberty in spiritual matters which we claimed of right? This liberty belonged to us, as we had demonstrated, by our formal deed of appeal; and we had challenged investigation thereanent. The armistice was haughtily refused, and our challenge was set aside with contempt. With our weapons, which "were not carnal," we could do no more. Our antagonists with theirs had much power still to injure us.

For a time we had been buoyed up with some comforting anticipations that, not only in view of the reckless course pursued against us by the law courts, but also in view of the position in which the Church was placed by its solemn announcement of what must inevitably happen in case no relief were granted, no Government,

and especially no *Conservative* Government, would encounter the threatened catastrophe, the breaking up, on the question in dispute, of one of the most useful and most honoured institutions of the kingdom. It was well known that the judges of the Court of Session were not of one mind in the deliverances given forth from that tribunal. The large minority there—who were men of the highest eminence, men who at the time gave all its lustre to the Scottish bench—were clearly in favour of our claims, as claims legal, constitutional, and just; moreover, as claims of a character calculated in their practical working, as long experience had proved, to be beneficial in themselves, and serviceable to the State. This had given strength to our hopes.

But early in this year matters changed. The warmest and most trustworthy supporters among us of Sir Robert Peel's Government, then in the plenitude of its popularity, began to fear that our expectations were doomed to meet with fatal disappointment. These friends were made to feel that their counsels, in the first instance not very warmly received, were being gradually but determinedly set aside. The Cabinet, especially its chief, chose to listen to those who cared not for the great principle for which the Church was contending—men who were not capable of understanding or appreciating its value, who had no

faith in the professions of those who were, who laughed to scorn those professions, and who looked on the contention as one simply of party, the object on the one side being to achieve such a victory over their ecclesiastical rivals as would subdue them utterly and deprive them for ever of the ascendency they had acquired in the country; and the object on the other side being to retain, to consolidate, and to perpetuate that ascendency.*

It must be said for the Government that their official representatives in Scotland, who ought to have had understanding of the times, were of one mind with the counsellors referred to, and with the majority of the judges of the Court of Session. All of them were persuaded that decision—a stern exercise of the power in their hands—would carry the day and compel submission. Particularly they were at one in the conviction that no number of ministers of the Church worth being counted of much importance would, notwithstanding their protestations to the contrary, for the sake of the dogma of spiritual independence, face privation, penury, social degradation, with the humiliations of various kinds which might be expected to follow. There was, therefore, no desistance from the

* "That momentous crisis (the Disruption) had left bitter feelings behind it. Our leading public men had displayed an indifference to the tendencies of religious opinion in Scotland, and a scandalous ignorance of her religious affairs."—*Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay.*

policy pursued, no relaxation of the rigour of prosecution, involving law expenses, fines, and ceaseless irritating inflictions and annoyances of many kinds. On the contrary, believing that the strong arm of law would do everything, treating with ridicule the claim made for relaxation until the mind of the Government was expressed, they went forward with bold purpose to make an end of our pretensions—to stamp them out; whilst we on our part could do no more than patiently endure, and, without offering defence, allow causes to go against us in all the courts of law in absence or by default.

The cry under a sense of wrong and oppression by the oppressed became very loud. The secret sense of cruel injustice became very intense. Neither prejudice nor blinding party rancour dominated *us*—ministers or people. The crisis had become too grave for that. There prevailed on all hands an intelligent apprehension of the truth for which we were contending in its vitality. It was no new battle we were fighting. It was the battle which, in long past days, stirred to the depths the hearts of the Scottish people, its object never having ceased to secure their warmest affections. In all the history of our national Church, from the beginning, the nature of our present contention might be read and known. It had "the strength of centuries in its pith and marrow, and in its veins the life-blood of a nation of old accustomed

to fear God and to honour the king." We were but following in the footsteps of worthies who had preceded us, we were but carrying out their contest with the rulers of the darkness of this world.

Many, nevertheless, were against us. The landed interest, with a few honourable exceptions, were so. The periodical press bore heavily in the same direction. The *Moderate* party in the Establishment, including the hostile section of the judges of the Court of Session, acting as elders, members of Assembly, seemed to have returned to the virulence of their most virulent times. They were bold and unrelenting. The consciousness of the power they could exert over us and the prospect of triumph made them so. They exulted—especially the clergy did, and they could not conceal their feelings—in the thought that, let the decision in answer to our appeal to those in high places be what it might, *they* were secure; whilst we, unless we succeeded in establishing our claims to the satisfaction of those to whom we had appealed, or, failing that, unless we then submitted and accepted their Erastian principle, conforming our practice thereto,—we must be cast out. They could go on, they admitted, in the Establishment on our idea, and they knew we could not on theirs. But though they were aware that a suitable declaration on their part to those in power of this fact would probably have saved the integrity of the Church

and delivered many a perplexed family of their brethren from their distress, they did not make it, for their hearts were set, not on deliverance for us and our cause, but on our destruction. The iron entered our soul. We were made most painfully to know the unspeakable evil of State connection for the Church—for any Church of Christ—when that connection comes to be used, as it may at any time be, for oppression in the form which had overtaken the Church of Scotland.

The decision by the House of Lords in the Auchterarder case—the case on which the whole question may be said to have been suspended—left us without protection, and at the mercy of the Court of Session. It was now LAW that if the Church did not obey the civil courts and at their bidding proceed to settle presentees by ordaining them, in order that they might be put in possession of the *livings*—of the temporalities connected with a ministerial charge—we might be punished for our disobedience—punished by the Court of Session awarding damages, at the instance of the presentee, to compensate him for his loss sustained by our refusing to ordain.* The voice of the people of a parish was to be wholly disregarded in the matter of forming the pastoral tie, except as certain mere *formalities* to be practised on the occasion might indicate the contrary, which were a mere mockery.

* The presentee in the case of Auchterarder was awarded £10,000.

Depression, in view of a result big with disaster to our beloved Sion, prevailed among us everywhere.

An absolute necessity had arisen that some step should be taken, having as its object deliverance and escape from the bondage which so galled us, and having as its object no less the continuance of our Church work—the fulfilment of our commission from above, and no change as to that. Moreover, whatever course as to both might be resolved on, necessary it was that we should act in concert—unitedly; that we should avoid isolated and individual action, doing what we did in our Church capacity. This sentiment became universal. Both ministers and people, all who were of one heart and one mind on our great question, took their stand as a united phalanx on this ground, which found its practical expression in the gathering which received the name of THE CONVOCATION.

The assembly so denominated was composed of *ministers*, ministers only. The lay element in our ecclesiastical government, elders, were not included. Those whose worldly all was at stake were left to themselves to deliberate and to decide.

The men who constituted the Convocation came from every part of the country; and all who came were understood to hold the same convictions as to the grand principle in defence of which our

Church at this crisis stood forth before the country and the world, the principle on which the Scottish Establishment had been constituted, the principle (which cannot be too often stated) that spiritual and ecclesiastical privileges and rights are derived from CHRIST, not from the civil magistrate or civil legislation; that, as they are thus derived, Christ's authority as to their use is supreme; that no other authority can lawfully interfere with, far less supersede, this authority; that, as King in Sion, He has given law regarding the use of those privileges and rights; and that He has appointed this law to be administered by officers selected according to the order given by Him, their jurisdiction being distinct from that of civil rulers, and in its own sphere co-ordinate with theirs, both governments being of Him, the latter existing inasmuch as He has a kingdom *in* the world which is not *of* the world.

The action of the Convocation proceeded on the assumption that this divine arrangement was being assailed by authority representing the nation; that the attempt was being avowedly made by that authority to set aside and annul the divine order referred to, in so doing dishonouring and injuring the cause of the Lord of heaven and earth. The time had come when, as we held, it must be determined whether, on account of the temporal maintenance bestowed by the State, the

Church must consider herself bound to admit this authority within her domain—must consider herself bound to subject to this authority Christ's royal prerogative, and, withal, the liberty He hath given His members in their associated capacity here below. Many held that no graver crisis had, since the days of the Saviour, occurred in the history of His Church. In the most prominent and most distinguished kingdom in Europe, in the greatest empire the world had ever seen, the most highly favoured of God, decision was to be given, in face of men and angels, whether the gifts and favour of the State might be enjoyed by the Church of the exalted Christ and at the same time be left free to take her law in matters affecting conscience from Him occupying the throne in heaven —from Him speaking in His Word—to the denial of all other guidance and rule; or whether such favour bestowed imposed on the State the duty of exercising right of inspection, superintendence, and control within the Church in matters both spiritual and civil, and consequently whether it imposed on the Church at the same time the duty, as already stated, of submitting to the said superintendence and control.

In these circumstances questions of deep importance fell to be considered by the CONVOCATION, as:—1st. Whether, in case the State insisted on exercising the control in question, the Church

should continue the connection heretofore subsisting, when it was believed, and when the belief was acted on, that we possessed all the liberty we now claimed as unalienably ours; or whether we should, in the case supposed, declare the connection *ipso facto* dissolved by breach of compact on part of the State. 2d. Whether the continued silence of Government—their continued refusal to reply to the appeal which had been addressed to them (the courts of law meanwhile persisting in their persecution)—should be counted by us to be a virtual approval and homologation of the legal decisions by which we were oppressed, and therefore a rejection of our claims. In this latter case we must necessarily conclude that, so far as human legislation was concerned, an end was made of the Church's pretensions, and that she was brought face to face with the question whether she would hold by what she believed to be vital truth committed to her charge at the expense of the loss of State favour, or abandon that truth for the sake of such favour. It was the old old question of "Obey Christ and suffer, or disregard such obedience and escape the suffering."

We, of course, together understood that our resolution, when we had arrived at it, should, previous to its final execution, be formally intimated to the ruling powers—intimated by memorial; and, moreover, that a reasonable time ought to be allowed ere

their silence should have the construction put upon it to which I have referred. We together understood also, as to the conclusion to which we might come, that we should pledge ourselves to each other to stand by our principle, neither forswearing nor forsaking it; also, that we should stand by each other, a united body, to carry out our great object, in the sight and by the grace of our glorious heavenly Lord.

It is no part of my purpose to write a history of the CONVOCATION — of the conferences so solemn, so intelligent, so masterly, and so protracted, which were held in Roxburgh Church—our place of meeting—in those days of the dark November of 1842. Suffice it to say, that, with some unimportant variety of views as to what duty demanded in the emergency in which we found ourselves, the conclusion at which we arrived was that, holding our great principle of spiritual liberty—the independence of the Church in all her action in spiritual things relatively to the State—the State being acknowledged to be supreme in all temporal matters—we should, in case the answer of Government was adverse to this claim, no longer carry on the work of our Church in the same relation to the State which we had hitherto held; and, further, that, in case no answer were made to our appeal to the Government, but a continued silence were persisted in, we should, after

the lapse of a reasonable interval, count their silence to involve a refusal to grant redress, and then act upon this conviction, making them distinctly to know previously that we did so.

When this resolution became known out of doors much was said for a while of its being an *illegal paction*, and interference with us in carrying out our purpose was understood to be a possibility. The interference never occurred. We went forward regardless of the rumour.

The immediate subsequent proceedings on the part of the Church were such as our purpose, determined by the sittings of the Convocation, demanded. It behoved the ministers who had pledged themselves, as described, to ascertain the views of the people of the Church—to ascertain whether they were of one mind with us; whether, we having resolved to dissolve our connection with the State that we might be free, in accordance with the divine will, to carry on the work of the Gospel in the land as still truly the Church of Scotland, they would stand by us and remain in the relation to us, in our respective congregations, which they had hitherto done. The question to be determined was, "Are the *people* of the Church with you?"

Means required to be taken without delay to visit every district, every corner of the country, to lay the state of the case fairly, fully, unreserv-

edly, and boldly before the people. It was with us a matter of life and death. The number of those who gave themselves to this arduous and testing work was great. The zeal which animated them all was unbounded. The intelligence touching the point at issue given to us all was wonderful. In whatever aspect we looked at the question, its magnitude, and the vital importance of the results which must follow should we succeed in our object, impressed our hearts, and had we been warranted to believe in any preter-ordinary interference in our behalf by Him whom we professed to serve in our undertaking, we might have persuaded ourselves that our mission was of a kind such as had been rarely if ever before committed to fallible men, and that our endowment with gifts therefor was special.

Abundant means were provided for the outlay which must necessarily be incurred. A central committee in Edinburgh, with Dr. Chalmers as its governing spirit, had its auxiliary committees and associations all over the land. The organization for executing our work effectually was perfect. Minds as inventive, far-seeing, and vigorous as Scotland had ever produced arranged all, down to the minutest details. Profound confidence in their skill and faithfulness possessed all, and the steady action which always accompanies such confidence was secured. As there were those

who aided in the rearing of Noah's ark who never entered it, and who had no share in the deliverance which that refuge afforded, so we had helps, given in good faith, by some who looked for no other effect than a salutary influence on the minds of the Government (deliverance being so expected), and who in the end did not enter into, nor share with us the joy, the privilege, and the happy security which came as the fruit of our labour.

The agitation became exciting in a high degree; it was likewise universal. North and south, east and west, throughout all our borders, the agitation prevailed. The Gaelic tongue, with its power of invective and declamation, was well employed; so was the English, with its many varieties of dialect. In the cities, the towns, the villages, the rural districts, including every market, the oppression to which the Church of our fathers was being subjected was expounded—the injustice that was being perpetrated, the fetters which were being forged to deprive us perpetually of the liberty, in the worship and service of Christ, which He has given on the earth to all His people, were amply set forth. This was the more easily and effectively done that the agitators' task was mainly of an historical character. They had but to tell what *had* been known in the experience of the Church in genera-

tions bygone, of which their hearers were not ignorant, and then to declare what the present experience *was*, what the interferences by courts of law, and what the determined, excessive rigour which distinguished that interference. The scriptural illustrations of the principle for which we contended—the principle of liberty in matters affecting the conscience—as well as of our persecution lay on the surface, and were easily understood, as they were fully appreciated, by those who were addressed.

The effects produced by this agitation were not known until the decisive step was taken for which we sought to prepare the country. Much incredulity, notwithstanding all our statements, existed whether the step would really be taken. By the press, and by hostile utterances of various kinds, we were met with most [illegible] accusations—accusations of [illegible] deceive the people for party purposes. Even those who might have had faith in us either held their peace, or joined in the cruel assertions which were made, up till the latest hour. The 18th of May, 1843, came, and it put an end to all that. Then the effect of our agitation was seen. Then it was seen that the deputations had been declaring truth. Nearly 500 ministers giving up their earthly all for the conservation of the principle which they had espoused and expounded,

was too good proof not to be available, and not to carry the heart and mind of the country. The power of God on the hearts and consciences of men, when the crisis came, was great, and the success of our efforts—as we gratefully acknowledged—proved far beyond what even the most sanguine had anticipated. Everywhere the Divine influence was felt, so that the remotest corners of the land yielded their portion of witnesses to our great testimony, and the Church of Scotland was morally made FREE.

I am not aware that any one of those who were deputed on this work of agitation has given to the Church and the public at large a *full* descriptive recital of the proceedings of that time—of their character and intent, as well as of the reception accorded the deputations, with the effects which followed. Mr. Brown's [illegible] *Annals of the Disruption*, furnishes some important writing of the character desiderated; but it seems desirable that something in this department more ample should be furnished. The story is now nearly forty years old; a new generation has risen up, who, having had no part in the momentous doings of the era in question, must be but partially informed about them. Of late both the character and origin of those events have been misrepresented, as they have been misunderstood; and discredit has been

attempted to be cast on them for reasons only too transparent. On such grounds it seems desirable that, before the men who were intrusted to take part in the action of the time, and who can from personal knowledge speak thereof, have passed away, any who have opportunity ought to put upon record such details as ought at once to silence sceptical objectors and satisfy, as well as inform, inquiring friends.

My intention, then, is to present to those who may be inclined to receive it, A CHAPTER OF MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY. I purpose that this chapter shall embrace portions of the two eventful years 1842 and 1843, and, therefore, include the season of great agitation, as well as the immediately succeeding season—that is, what immediately preceded our eventful State separation; that separation itself; and what immediately followed. I shall confine myself to matters ecclesiastical—matters in which I took part, or of which I was a witness, and in which I was associated with other friends of our Church, appointed, as I was, by the ecclesiastical authorities who guided the operations of this great crisis. I claim no interest attaching to my narrative which would not attach to the separate narrative of each deputy of the many who went forth in the same capacity over the length and breadth of the land. All I say on this head is, that from one example my readers may under-

stand the character of the proceedings of all the other labourers in this field—*Ex uno disce omnes* —and, further, to express the opinion that the multiplication of such records might be a valuable gift to our Church, looking to the future which awaits her.

SECTION I.

My relations, personally, to the great question—My position at Stirling—Difficulties connected therewith—North Church—Public proceedings after the Convocation—Various impressions prevailing in our neighbourhood—Lord Abercromby—Others—Deputation work—Nature of statements made at the meetings held—Earlier work of the same kind—Jedburgh—Hawick—Descriptive scenes.

At the era of the Disruption I was minister of the first, or parochial, charge of the royal burgh of Stirling. I was settled in Stirling in 1839, having been previously for nineteen years a minister of the Establishment in other congregations. To this important position I was advanced when our great conflict was at its hottest. I am not at present to write any word as to the place I took and the part I acted in the eventful Disruption struggle. Though I might record much interesting matter, looking to those who were associated with me, and to the results which were accomplished in our district of country, I refrain, as I should thereby be led into a field far too wide for my proposed work.

Immediately after my return from the meeting of Convocation I gave to my congregation from the pulpit, on the Sabbath, as detailed an account of

our proceedings there as I, at that stage, counted necessary. My statement concluded with a request that they should all meet with me on an evening, which I announced, in that week when I should address them at length on the matters—vital in their character—for which the Church to which we belonged had been contending; on the obligations which I believed rested on both minister and people; and on the course which I intended to follow, however I might grieve that a necessity so grave had risen as to make that course the only one possible to me and to my brethren in the ministry if we were to abide faithful to our principles.

A special difficulty weighed on my mind. We had been worshipping together, congregation and pastor, in the building occupied by us at this time for about six months only. It was a third Parish Church, built by subscription, a costly structure. I had occupied one of the old churches (the West Church) for about four years previous to the erection of the North Church, now referred to. This new structure had been reared principally through my influence and at my instigation. Responsibility for a debt upon the building of more than £2000 was shared with me equally by *ten* friends, office-bearers of the Church and others—responsibility into which I might be considered to have led all involved therein. From

the terms of the arrangement under which we had achieved what was held to be a very important work for Stirling, little risk of loss could have arisen had no breach in our ecclesiastical institution occurred. But I was forced to look in the face a too evident probability that such breach was at hand, to result in pecuniary loss in this transaction, with no recourse for relief existing in any direction. Amidst the grief I felt for my associates my almost only consolation was that I was myself involved as much as they were, and, indeed, that to me the loss behoved to be more alarming than to any one else from my official relation to the building from which we feared we should be so soon extruded. Had we been all of one mind on our great Church question we might, perchance, have succeeded in being permitted the use of the building during the years we had stipulated with our civil authorities that we should receive the proceeds of its revenues of various kinds. These we were to have for thirty years to pay off all debt upon the building, which at the end of that time was to be given over to them free and unencumbered. But we were not of one mind. *Five* held decided views in accordance with my own, and *five* opposed; my position gave the preponderance, by a single vote, to the former. I had to face the all but inevitable contingency that the five *contras*, who had been

literally "sleeping partners"—little more—would oppose the continued occupation of the Church by the congregation who might adhere to my ministry, and that they would, if necessary, employ the legal lever, then in very free use and of certain efficacy, to eject me and all who might follow me, from our stately place of worship; a structure which, with very little exception, we had, with our own means and by our labour, reared for our own use. This in due course of time occurred. The *threat* of litigation was enough. We declined the battle and preserved our money for a better use than the cost of LAW,—law as administered in the times on which we had fallen. It was a trial—to me particularly—the bitterness of which weighed heavily on me. Duty, however, was clear. This stilled all murmuring; at least I felt it ought to do so.

When the evening came on which I had announced to my congregation I should address them on the question agitating the country, and should declare to them the course I had made up my mind to pursue, almost the whole congregation came to hear what I had to say. I spoke to them for two hours; expounded, as clearly as I could, the whole truth illustrative of our contendings for years back; the obligation resting on me, and on us all, of abiding by the testimony we had lifted up; and my fixed resolution, in

case Government did not interfere to protect our Church from the encroachments of the civil courts, and permit us such liberty as we had always used in the belief that it was ours, to abandon, with my brethren, my position as a minister of the Establishment, and then to continue to minister to as many as might adhere to me apart from the Establishment and separated from State connection, explaining that in doing this I made no change inconsistent with my ordination vows and my engagements to them when I became their pastor; but, on the contrary, did only what was made necessary by the hostile, unconstitutional proceedings of the civil courts, the doing of which on my part being required that I might be faithful to those vows, and that I might honestly act by them, my flock, as I had pledged myself to do when set over them in the Lord.

My statement, which had been heard with profound attention, produced much excitement. Subsequent frequent communings were held among the hearers. Some months after it was seen that I had not spoken without effect, but meanwhile I could not perceive, and did not anticipate, that any favourable result was to be realized. The office-bearers who were of my views, and a few other friends, shortly after called the congregation together again, with the purpose of inducing them to pledge themselves to adhere to

my ministry, and to the majority in the Church in support of their present conflict with the civil courts for our common spiritual freedom. But although much kindly feeling was, on all hands, expressed, only somewhere about 250 of all classes agreed to attach themselves to the Free Church when it should become an institution, or to my ministry as one of its servants. This was not very encouraging, but neither did I count it very discouraging. We all knew that our cause was not popular; that such an amount of misrepresentation, as well as misapprehension, prevailed, that we could not expect, until the mists were cleared away, that men would see what we saw, or believe and follow with us.

The local papers reported my statement with tolerable accuracy. The writers there were jubilant over the Quixotic procedure of the "Rev. Gentleman," his folly in committing himself as he did, by such a public pledge, to a course which the country would never see realized, either in him or in any of those who, like him, spoke so confidently, and with such apparent determination. The class of my townsmen who thought with those writers could not conceal their joy in prospect of the triumph which the community generally should have over us by the end of the ensuing month of May. The anticipation of our failing then was cherished by many in every grade of

society. Few believed that we intended to do what, both at the Convocation and otherwise, we had solemnly pledged ourselves to do in the contingency we had described, should it occur. Real friends heard all, and trembled for us. One unbelieving brother, not very friendly, of another denomination, engaged to put all the ministers who should "come out" into his hat! Another of the same *faith* engaged to "eat them." The scorn with which the procedure inaugurated at Stirling by me was everywhere met in our district can scarcely be described, and it produced in all our minds most mournful reflections. So little faith often is there in the existence of governing principle, or in the power of conscience, in the minds of many clothed with the cloak of a religious profession but secular and "earthy" in their feelings — men dead while they live. For me, I own I felt this to be a grievous and paralyzing element in the trial through which we were, at the time, called to pass.

Dining on an evening at Airthrie Castle with a distinguished party, Lord Abercromby, grandfather of the present (1877) representative of the family, who was then an old man, a true Liberal in politics, and naturally kind-hearted, spoke to me, in presence of his guests, of the reported movement in the Establishment, and of our reported intention of separation from the State.

He asked, with apparent anxiety, if I believed there was a serious purpose to take such a step as we were said to be contemplating. On my assuring his lordship that nothing could be more certain that had not actually occurred, should the Government and the Legislature continue to refuse our most reasonable and constitutional claims, he said to me, with some feeling, "The country will never allow it. Scotland knows better." My only answer was that "I feared we had fallen on evil times, and the country into evil counsels."

All who interested themselves in our question, now that matters began to look serious, and who sought to interfere, were not *gentlemen* like Lord Abercromby. At another table, about the same time, I was told, with considerable energy on the part of the speaker, "that if a few of us were hanged we should get what we deserved, and then the fervour of all the survivors would rapidly cool." My answer was, that "his method had been tried in Scotland before by men of his views, but that it had not produced such results as he pointed at; neither would the persecution inflicted on our Church do it now, as I hoped he would live to see."

It has sometimes been urged, that had we at this time been reasonable, had we desisted from so-called extreme proceedings, the catastrophe might have been averted. We were called on to

repeal the VETO LAW, to submit to the decisions which had been pronounced by the courts against that law, which decisions had finally determined what the Law of the land was; to put ourselves, when we had done that, into the hands of the Government, to receive from them, if it might be, what we desired. We over and over again answered that we had no special love for the Veto Law, if we were assured of any measure equivalent to it—any measure which might secure the rights of the Christian people and the power of self-government to the Church. In proof of which various proposals were discussed at the time, such as that of the *Liberum Arbitrium*, which we might have accepted. But the least consideration may show that had we submitted as was proposed to us, had we quitted our position, constitutional and lawful as we held it to be, had we surrendered at discretion, we should have placed our great cause at the disposal of authority from which nothing could be looked for but such bonds as now are worn by the existing ecclesiastical Establishment of the country. Such a course would have left us helpless, and would have made us justly a scorn to the whole world. And what would the surrender have been for? For the temporalities merely—for the State provision in support of the Church. Had no other resource than State provision existed; had we not had in the land an illustration of

what could be accomplished without such aid, even then we should have been without excuse. But when we had before our eyes evidence that State support was not a necessity of the Church of Christ, much more should we have been without excuse had we hesitated, had we listened to the unfriendly cry that we ought to yield, that we ought to obey the law of the land, that we ought to fall from our rebellion, with all similar vituperative appeals which saluted our ears. The Lord was on our head—the Breaker going before. We did not lay down our arms. We did not permit our Church, by doing so, to be placed at the mercy of an enemy from whom everything was to be feared touching the rights which we claimed, as the event has proved—everything calculated to shackle and to degrade Christ's free commonwealth.

My time for deputation work had come. The work consisted of a series of meetings held all over the country, very much of the character of that which I had held with my own congregation at Stirling. The work lasted, generally, from the time of the Convocation until the Disruption. The chief portion was prosecuted under the superintendence, and subject to the instructions of the presiding provisional committee in Edinburgh, which made the arrangements. The rest was

accomplished by me on the invitation of parties who desired to hear my explanation of matters, and who therefore solicited my visits both for themselves and for others who stood much in need of illumination and awakening. As the tenor of my addresses was everywhere much of the same character, it may serve the purpose of conciseness and brevity that, before I enter on my narrative of agitation, I should offer a succinct account, in substance, of what I stated to my various audiences, and what I sought to impress on their minds.

My statement was largely historical—the history of the interferences with the Church of Scotland by the Civil power throughout all her course of action. To this interference (unnecessary and ultroneous I showed it to be) I traced all her sorrows. I spoke of her sufferings from this cause after both the first and second Reformation, during all the time of the Stewarts. I fully explained the change which came with the Revolution of 1688 and the accession of William. The defective character of the settlement of the affairs of our Church then I carefully set forth, proving, as I thought, that the position taken up by those who rejected that settlement, few though they were in number, was the right position, when they repudiated the idea of accepting from human authority that which belonged to

the whole Church of Christ as of divine gift and divine appointment. The first evidence of the soundness of the views of those Hill-men, or Society-men, as they were called, was the fact of the restoration of Church patronage by the Tory Government of Queen Anne, some twelve or fourteen years after the Revolution; thereafter, the result of this treacherous procedure on the part of that Government (who found ready instruments to serve their ends within the Establishment) in the various secessions which occurred in the lapse of years by no means many. The part acted by the good men who remained and did not separate from the Establishment at the time of those secessions was explained and vindicated. This body, a small minority, pled as the cause of their not joining the seceding brethren the fact that the forced settlements, and, generally, the tyrannical administration which had driven them (the Erskines and others) out, were perpetrated, not by the civil power beyond, but by a dominant majority of despotic spiritual rulers within the Establishment, and therefore was an evil which might, and as they believed, would be avoided, corrected, condemned, and overthrown, by similar powers within when times of reformation arrived. The time during which the protesting party looked forward to what they eagerly desired to see was long. But the event did arrive. The majority,

so long the bane of Scotland, grew smaller year by year, and through God's good hand on the Church the long-contending minority at length became the majority. The pledge which had uniformly been given to the country behoved then to be redeemed. To this sacred engagement the now majority served themselves heirs. The various methods which, by this reforming party, were proposed for giving to the Christian people of the Church the liberty to choose their own office-bearers, according to the Scripture rule, were recounted. The history of the VETO LAW—that form adopted by the Church for that end when delivered from the incubus of *moderatism*—in consciousness of their title to do so, was always expounded at length; as well as the resistance thereto which arose, after a short but successful experience of its working—a resistance not from within the Church but from the secular power beyond it. The cases of Auchterarder, Lethendy, Culsalmond, and Marnoch were fully narrated and commented on. In the narration of the last-named case it was shown how, in connection with it, the controversy with the civil courts passed from being one in behalf of the rights of the people in the choice of their ministers and other office-bearers, to be one also for the liberty of Church courts and of Church officers in the administration of the business of the Church.

Detailed exposition of every step in the prosecutions urged against the Church, with the calamity of fines actually imposed and payment exacted, to an enormous amount, with imprisonment threatened, was gone into, showing that in every department of the spiritual action of the Church, as in our exercise of discipline, even our preaching of the Gospel and administration of ordinances, we were interfered with, and were overborne by the civil courts, whilst, though the cry of our oppression was made to reach the Government, no response was made, and no hope of relief or deliverance was held out. The conclusion to which I endeavoured to shut up all who heard me was, that duty—faithfulness to the Lord in heaven and to His members on earth—demanded from us repudiation of State oppression, liberty of action as obeying Christ, the Lord of the conscience—privileges which, however, we had been plainly told could not be enjoyed if we retained the relation in which we then stood to the civil authority of the kingdom. A non-established condition, therefore, I uniformly taught must become our condition as one of the Churches of Christendom if we were to fulfil the mission to which we had been as a *Church* set apart, and if we were also to fulfil generally the grand purpose of a Christian ministry. The duty of those who had been compelled to occupy the front in the great contest,

now drawing to a close, I uniformly maintained was the duty of all within the realm. Disestablishment on the one hand or the death of real spiritual Church action on the other were, I maintained, the alternatives on which, one or other, we were all called to decide, and one or other of which we must choose.

At every meeting the hearers were invited to interrogate the speaker if they desired to do so, that they might satisfy their minds, should they be in doubt. Ample opportunity of discussion was afforded. This sometimes was accepted, and occasionally, though not often, lively scenes gave zest to the proceedings. Our cause, on its merits, was popular—it had always been in Scotland. What we taught respecting the rights, both of the people and their ministers, was hailed with acclamation. Yet distrust in us, in our sincerity and real intentions as to the ultimate issue, as I have already said, produced in numerous instances hesitation in professing adherence to us, or in giving pledges to that effect.

My week work during my peregrinations, day and night, consisted in delivering addresses of a character such as the foregoing outline indicates, wherever audiences, great or small, could be assembled. The Sabbath, on the other hand, was occupied scrupulously in preaching the Gospel of the grace of God. This was done with what-

ever clearness, faithfulness, and force I could employ, with a sense of special enjoyment, caused greatly by the contrast with the services of the week—the one was desired, the other was, by circumstances, forced on me.

Before proceeding to the narrative of deputation proceedings in 1842, it may not be out of place that I should state that work such as I have to narrate of that period, had previously been fulfilled by me, as well as by others engaged in the great conflict. In the first month of 1840, by which time the aggressions of the civil courts had become very alarming, it was deemed to be necessary that measures should be taken to keep the country informed of all that was going on. The newspaper press did not fulfil its duty, speaking generally, in declaring the whole truth, or the real truth, touching the progress of events. The public mind, as we thought, was not being fully or faithfully informed—a fact which created an imperative duty on the part of the Church. Deputations were accordingly sent into several parts of the country that they might give a fair account of matters, thereby to prevent misconceptions, to secure the sympathy of the people, and to obtain their support in our arduous efforts. This proved to be a wise course, as it also formed a suitable preparation for the more extended efforts of a

similar kind made on the eve of the Disruption. Discussions in Church courts always do much, in our country, to keep the minds of the people informed, and if they be fully reported, or reported without hostile comment, may render unnecessary anything more. When we thought this was not the case it became us to see to our interests in our own way.

In the month of January, 1840, I was deputed on service of the kind referred to—Jedburgh, Hawick, and Kelso being the field of operation. My associate on the occasion was Mr. (now Dr.) Moody Stuart. We opened our campaign at the first-named place. Mr. (now Dr.) Purves was minister of the parish, and still continues to be so under our Free banner. A large audience waited on our service. We all three spoke, the minister of the congregation concluding the business of the evening. The discussion took the direction I have indicated above, with such variety of statement as the character of each speaker necessarily occasioned. I can testify to the great power and the manifest effectiveness of my associates in this the first effort of the kind in which I had been engaged or which I had witnessed, as I can testify also to the practical result in the cordial assent given to our expositions, and the numerous adherence to our views.

As another day was all we could give to this work at the time, and as both Kelso and Hawick

were to be visited, my fellow-worker bent his way on the morrow to Kelso whilst I took the road to Hawick, meetings in both places having been advertised for the evening.

The road from Jedburgh to Hawick (the time of railway trains had not then come) is not interesting. One incident, however, on the way attracted and interested me, and has made the part of the road at which it occurred memorable in my mind. I travelled in an open gig. The weather, though fair, was not very propitious or enlivening. As we moved along I was aroused from some perhaps uncheerful reflections on the state of matters in our ecclesiastical world by the sound of hallooing and immense clatter to the right of the way, a tract of tolerably level road on which we were advancing. Looking in the direction from which the noise proceeded, I perceived a large company of riders, ladies and gentlemen, dressed in colours calculated to draw attention, as they scampered along the side of the mountain on their way to more level ground. "What can this be?" I said to the boy who drove me. "Oo! they're the gentry huntin'," was the reply. "What are they hunting?" "Oo! they're huntin' hares." "And are all these dogs as well as the riders after hares?" "Aye are they, it's grand work for them; they're no thinkan o' things like what ye were speaking o' last night." In the midst of this con-

versation I observed a poor draggled, diminutive creature, nearly exhausted, crossing the road a little ahead of our conveyance. It was not larger, as appeared to me, than a well-grown rat, an object to excite compassion and to forbid cruelty. "Is it that poor creature all yonder company, men, women, horses, dogs, are pursuing?" "Deed is't, sir, and they'll be gae proud whan they hae killed it." I could not but contrast the state of mind of that gay gathering with my own, and with that of many like me in our native land, trembling in view of the things which, as we believed, were coming on our Church and country through the present action of our civil rulers. Could I think there was one in this hunting company who cared? As to the poor hare, I know not what her fate was. Some faint infant-like death-scream probably was all that the world ever heard indicative of her sorrow. It might be the happier for her so to be rid of the world, and never again to know the agony through which I saw her passing with some such emotion, I confess, as awakened the genius of our country's bard when, addressing such another sufferer, he said—

"Seek, mangled wretch, some place of wonted rest,
No more of rest, but now thy dying bed!
The sheltering rushes whistling o'er thy head,
The cold earth with thy bloody bosom prest.
I'll miss thee sporting o'er the dewy lawn,
And mourn thy hapless fate."

The meeting at Hawick was largely attended, and proved very successful. The minister of the parish in whose church we were convened, Mr. Wallace, now no longer with us—gone to the better country—presided. The official speaking was exclusively in my hands. For two hours I addressed the assembled throng, whose interest in the things spoken never flagged. Mr. Wallace followed with a statement, clear and elegantly expressed, in all things confirming the views which I had attempted to enunciate. At the close I was subjected to some questioning on the part of an intelligent weaver, who accepted the invitation to make such inquiries as might have been suggested by the things the audience had heard. This weaver was willing to rest his adherence to us on my being able to adduce any instance in which any of the Evangelical party—that party which was now advocating spiritual independence so strongly—had ever on any previous occasion taken the same ground, or shown that they understood the claim as we now did, and as we now battled for. I happily remembered the course which Dr. Andrew Thomson of Edinburgh had taken in the matter of the orders in council issued forbidding public prayers in the churches for Queen Caroline, in George IV.'s time. Of this I made as strong an example, such as my questioner desired, as I could, and as I felt I was warranted to do. The weaver declared

himself satisfied, and in after times proved a good Free Churchman. Several instances which came to my knowledge afterwards satisfied me that the great cause in hand was essentially served by our visit to Hawick, and the other towns I have named, on this occasion.

Next day saw me on my journey back to Stirling. I passed the scene of poor grimalkin's sufferings. The hillside was quiet; no echoing shouts issued from its heathery slopes. Perhaps the object of my pity had escaped; perhaps the whistling rushes were to her a shelter and a solace, whilst memory could furnish nothing to disturb her peace, and no material for feelings of revenge or malice.

SECTION II.

Deputation to Presbytery of Perth—Perth—Dr. John Forbes—Ministers of the Presbytery—Heritors connected therewith—Forgandenny—Dunbarney—Tibbermore—Curling Match—Mr. Tulloch—Scone—Sir James Graham's letter—Stanley, Mr. Mather—Aberdalgie, Mr. Charles Stewart—Kilspindie, Mr. Rait—Errol, Dr. Grierson—Glendoick, Mr. Craigie, his family—St. Maddoes, Mr. Noble—Moneydie, Mr. J. Thomson—Logiealmond, Mr. Watson—Huntingtower, Mr. Turnbull—Ruthven House, Mr. M'Laggan—Meeting—Abernethy Meeting—Ladies of the Manse in all this Presbytery.

The first days of January, 1843, found me in the city of Perth as one of the deputies to the Presbytery of Perth, appointed by the General Committee in Edinburgh. Dr. John Forbes, of the Outer High Church, Glasgow, was my appointed colleague in the work on which we were now commissioned. It was not the first occasion on which I was associated with this estimable minister in the defensive work in behalf of our beloved Sion, to which the present era and its difficulties had given rise. In 1840—the summer succeeding the winter visit in the south—more than two years before our present colleagueship, he had, with me, formed one of the seven ministers who were deputed to visit the region of Strathbogie to preach there in the face of interdicts by the Court

of Session. The other five ministers of this deputation were Dr. Gordon, who was chief of the party on the occasion, Mr., now Dr. Bruce, both ministers in Edinburgh; Dr. Henderson, Dr. John Smyth, both of Glasgow; and Mr., afterwards Dr. Bannerman, then of Ormiston. We had in this Strathbogie campaign acquired some expertness in the tactics of war that we were now called on to use, and were able wisely to arrange and apportion the service which we should respectively, either separately or together, be called to at present.

The brother in charge, subordinately, of the deputation to the Presbytery of Perth, was Mr. Andrew Gray, minister of the West Church of the Fair City. No man could have been better calculated for the office which he had now to fulfil in our behalf. The programme of our projected invasion was, when we arrived, ready prepared in all its details. We had no occasion to discuss its merits, assured of its satisfactory character, and willing as we were to conform ourselves to the instructions submitted for our approval. Mr. Milne, of St. Leonard's Church, had been much in counsel with Mr. Gray, as were also the other ministers of the city, and some of the ministers of the neighbourhood, so that our minds were at rest as to the mode of procedure.

On Monday, 9th January, about noon, Dr.

Forbes and I arrived in Perth on our mission of agitation. We were met by Mr. Gray and other friends. It took little time to instruct us in what we were expected to do, and to lay before us the line of action it was desired we should follow. All was soon and pleasantly settled. No delay in commencing our work occurred. At seven o'clock of this evening Dr. Forbes betook himself to the Middle Church. I betook myself to St. Stephen's Church. Good audiences were assembled in both places, and for about the same length of time—two hours—we laboured to impress our hearers with such views as I have rehearsed above. Many at the close came up and cordially signed our papers of adherence.

In such form we entered on the work. Next morning some ministers from the rural portion of the Presbytery joined the ministers of Perth in conference, a conference at which the deputies were, of course, present. The question which it was thought proper to consider was the expediency of holding *public* meetings in some of the parishes. As to two of them, particularly, it was represented that the hostility of the proprietors was such, and their influence over the people such, that we might certainly calculate on counter meetings, by which a condition of things injurious to our object, and very detrimental to the usefulness and comfort of the ministers in question, would be

produced. This was urged on us, very particularly, as to the parishes of Dunbarney, Forgandenny, and Aberdalgie. We might, however, visit them all, preach on the Sabbath, and use our influence by all manner of persuasion, only avoiding the notoriety which must be occasioned by public meetings.

It may be proper to remark that in no part of Scotland, among the aristocracy, was there a more bigoted and blind resistance to the action of the Church at this time, than in Perthshire. This class of society there were noted then, as they are noted now, for their adherence to extreme anti-Liberal and Tory convictions. In the religious movement of the time they saw certain revolution, and certain overthrow of the Constitution of the country. In this region, first in Scotland, a rural constabulary was instituted, and much, it was understood, because of the alarm occasioned by the procedure of the Church in its efforts at reformation and extension. All this it became our duty to look at, when presented to us for our consideration, however much we might deem the lordly fears to be the fruit of ignorance. Perhaps we would have preferred to be permitted to proceed, in our visitations, without respect to aristocratic prejudices, yet, not to offend and not to incommode or unnecessarily disturb the peace of those brethren in their parishes, we yielded our views to theirs, and

acted on their recommendations. In the case of brethren on our side, and of our views, we so acted. In the case of the others, as they did not offer any counsel, we asked none; and accordingly we took our measures, holding public meetings, and dealing with their people in the use of our liberty as we thought most advantageous, in furtherance of our object. The Perth ministers, among whom was Dr. William Thomson, the brother of Dr. Andrew Thomson, of Edinburgh, a man of rare sagacity, brotherly kindness and charity, were gratified by our consenting to this amount of sacrifice of our convictions, as well as by our consenting to adopt their previously arranged plan of procedure. A suggestion was made that we might adopt the stated prayer-meeting evening in those parishes as the time of our more private visits, and take advantage of such gatherings of the people as might then be provided, for setting before them the things we desired they should consider. But this, too, was set aside, inasmuch as, unless we gave previous notice of our intention of so addressing them, it might be looked on as stealing a march, and using craft in our present calling. On the other hand, if we gave previous notice, the meetings, to all intents and purposes, would fall under the name of public meetings, which we had agreed to avoid.

On the breaking up of our conference, which

was held after breakfast at Mr. Gray's, Dr. Forbes and I, according to the plan proposed, proceeded to Dunbarney. There, by private communing, we did what we could in the way of serving the cause on which we had come out. It was arranged that I should return and preach on first Lord's-day, which I did when the time came. A visit of the same kind to Aberdalgie had the same result. I preached in both parishes. In the evening, after our return from Dunbarney, we held two public meetings again in the city churches —Dr. Forbes in one and I in the other. It fell to me to be associated with Mr. Gray on this occasion, as our meeting was held in his, the West, Church. We each spoke for an hour to a large and apparently much interested audience.

Next day (11th January), accompanied by Mr. Gray, Dr. Forbes and I started on foot to walk to Forgandenny, travelling across the hill by Cherry Bank. It was a delightful winter day, and much did we enjoy our walk. Laying aside for the time discussion of "the Church question," Dr. Forbes discoursed, to our instruction and great satisfaction, on various points of natural science, giving us, as we went along, practical illustrations of the truth of some of his lessons, especially in the department of optics. The weather was in every respect favourable for the illustrations he offered in support of the facts with which he so greatly

entertained us, so that we arrived at the beautiful manse of Forgandenny—beautiful even in winter, the doorway being garnished with roses, the bloom not utterly gone—with knowledge in our heads (I mean Mr. Gray and myself) which had not been there before. In accomplishing this journey we passed the river-ferry immortalized in being associated with the memory of the lamented William Arnot, a name which, for generations to come, will awaken sentiments warm with affection and admiration both in Scotland and other lands.

Our conversation with the minister—the much-esteemed and still surviving minister, Mr. Drummond—satisfied us all that the wise and becoming course had been adopted in agreeing not to hold a public meeting at Forgandenny. The Ruthven family, we were informed, had shown some kindness in connection with our great struggle. Both Lord and Lady Ruthven condemned the Court of Session for the reckless persistence on their part which had pushed the Church into a position so critical as had now arisen. But they did not acquit us of blame that we refused to bear the affliction, and avoid the terrible extremity of breaking up the Establishment. It was useless to urge on them the necessity which the law proceedings had created. Persons of their cast of mind, and of their political predilections or prejudices, could take one view only of the great ques-

tion which had come to be decided, and that certainly an erroneous view. Their partial favour, which Mr. Drummond had experienced, might have arisen from the fact, of course well known to them, that in the days of Charles II. their family had sheltered and saved from danger one of the persecuted ministers, who, unknown to the authorities, was received as an inmate into the house in the assumed capacity of tutor and family chaplain. Whatever kind consideration an influence of this character might for a time produce, it was all too weak a principle to carry the present representatives of the Ruthven family through the trial of faith and consistency now existing. Residing in a neighbourhood noted for ignorant and embittered resistance to the action of the Church, that of the Moncrieffes of Moncrieffe, the Kinnouls, the Smythes, and others of similar prejudices, it was too much to expect that the Ruthvens should become exceptional as to their attitude, or that they should not resist like others. This good Mr. Drummond was made to know in forms sufficiently painful ere much time had passed.

Our fatiguing journey to and from Forgandenny by the hill road we had traversed did not prevent the prosecution of our deputation work. Seven o'clock saw us in St. Leonard's, of which the gifted and loving Mr. Milne was then minister.

The church was crowded in every part. Mr. Milne presided with his usual suavity and tact. Both Dr. Forbes and I addressed the audience, each occupying an hour—not without effect, if we might judge by the hearty reception given us, and the number, about 600, who came forward to adhibit their names to the paper of adherence.

We had now completed the week-day public assemblages in Perth, and we felt we had cause to be satisfied. The numbers attending to hear increased at each successive meeting. We had reason also to believe that both the apprehension of the question as well as the interest therein had not a little grown even already in this town. Friends were satisfied, and they encouraged us.

Our first effort in the rural districts of the Presbytery was made in the parish of Tibbermore, of which Mr. Tulloch, father of the present Principal Tulloch, St. Andrews, was then minister. Mr. Tulloch was a non-intrusionist. He had hitherto gone with us in our action, seeking with us to liberalize our Church—to secure for her members and office-bearers of every order the privileges which belonged to them by gift of heaven as well as by the constitutional law of our country. Mr. Tulloch was of the Liberal political school, and had conducted with much success a newspaper in the interests of that party in the town of Perth. If he was not of the first class of preachers of the popu-

lar Church section with which he claimed alliance, he nevertheless was reckoned among the Evangelical ministers of his time. In all secular questions which affected our Church he was considered an authority.

On the day following our walk to Forgandenny (12th January) Dr. Forbes and I proceeded to Tibbermore. We had brought a conveyance from Perth, which, being disposed of, we proceeded on foot to the manse. Our knock brought the servant girl to the door. "Is the minister at home?" "No." "Is he near or about the place?" "No" again. "Could we not see him—is he far off?" "He is at the ICE, a gae bit aff." I did not understand where the locality so described was, nor what this description implied. Dr. Forbes, however, was better informed, and not unacquainted with the current phraseology. A short conversation with the respectable-looking servant girl made us acquainted with the fact, which she seemed surprised we should not be aware of, that a great curling match was in progress some mile or two away. Thither the minister had gone, and there it behoved us to seek him. The weather was beautiful. A keen frost, which had prevailed for some days, and had set its seal on all waters of the district; a bright sun, low in the sky, but sufficiently ardent; the crisp sod under our feet, and the almost awful silence amidst the calm of the

day, and the absence at the ICE of every living human being within its reach—all combined to inspire my companion and myself with quickened impulse to prosecute our deputation work in the original and novel circumstances in which we found ourselves at Tibbermore. A walk of some length brought us to the ICE—an extensive pond on the road from Perth to Auchterarder—and there a sight worth seeing was presented to our view. For my part, as I had never before witnessed a real BONSPIEL, with the curiosity I felt, as well as the delight that such an opportunity as the present was afforded me, I am bound to confess the proper work of the day, for a little, escaped my thoughts, so that, although we did not at the first attempt discover the minister of Tibbermore, I was not grieved at our disappointment, as I was set on having a look at the match.

The whole space of that extensive frozen surface was crowded. The multitude was vast. On the outskirts there were crowds of skaters, sliders, and idle strolling onlookers. Beyond them on the shore there were canvas tents, very numerous, a few of very aristocratic appearance, but the larger portion of ordinary enough look, all giving token that, within, refreshments were to be had for weary travellers, and for the devotees of the "roaring game," when they could, at any time, so deny themselves as to withdraw, even temporarily,

from their attractive pastime—most attractive, engrossing, and exciting it seemed to be. Intermingled with these were gentlemens' carriages, liveried servants, carts and horses. Within this double margin, occupied as described, were the RINKS, very many—how many I could not, for the crowd, count. They were generally, and with much regard to order, arranged parallel to each other. Some of the rinks seemed, from the character of the players, more popular than others. Some had dense masses of onlookers, who encircled the performers within; to secure sufficient space for whose action, by keeping the circle line large enough, considerable effort seemed sometimes to be required. Others had thinner circles of observers and admirers, but as there was an unceasing movement among the non-players, a going from one rink to another, to mark the progress of the game all round, none were without a sufficient body of apparently most deeply interested observers. Persons of every grade in society were engaged in the play. Ladies of high quality stood among the observers and admirers. The whole aristocracy of Perthshire seemed to have congregated on the occasion to this outlandish spot. It was very observable, too, that where the aristocratic players were engaged the witnessing cloud was densest. This was not to be ascribed altogether to the curiosity which common people

have to look on the faces of the great, but also much to the circumstance that, associated with the aristocratic players, were usually found some of the crack players of the humbler classes. It was pleasant to see the familiarity and friendly bearing towards each other of all classes, and, at the same time, the native politeness of our Scotch yeomanry when called to act their part on such occasions as the present. The landlord of high caste and his tenant, or his cottar, or his workman, or his domestic man-servant, all acted in the game as equals, addressing each other by name, approving of or condemning the play of each other without fear, nay, with a boldness and strength of expression on the one side and the other, which made me wonder. The Earl of Mansfield was there—his rink being graced by the presence of the beautiful Lady Moncrieffe, then a widow, subsequently the Countess of Bradford, with other highly dressed ladies of similar rank, among whom, however, Lady Moncrieffe moved as a queen. The Hon. Fox Maule, afterwards Lord Dalhousie, was there, not less honoured than Lord Mansfield by the circle of beauty that adorned his rink. Others—several of the same class—took part in the proceedings on THE ICE that day—a day which deeply impressed itself on my mind—most of whom have departed from this world of vanity, those who have not having sunk

into the "sear and yellow leaf" of human life, to whom such pleasures can never more minister delight.

My friend and I lost time in witnessing this scene. He seemed to have afresh awakened within him a passion which, though now slumbering, once had been known in strength. His remarks as he watched the "shots" of the various players, the lines in which the curling-stones ran as they were propelled from the hands of the players, showed me the interest which was stirred within him by the scene, as well as the knowledge which he possessed of this noisy pastime. ROARING it is called, most justly, for every man engaged seemed as if he felt under obligation to make all the noise with his voice which he could, whilst the sound of the stones as they rushed on their course afforded a most harmonious chorus—harmonious in consistency and in sympathy with the excited vociferations of all whose hands were in. The day's WORK was one to be spoken of during all the after season, as well as in the next to come, whoever might see it; and perhaps the next again.

Enjoyment such as we now had, in the interval of pressing duty, has its limits. The sun was beginning to decline in the south; the winter evening with its discomforts would soon be on us. We must search throughout this vast assemblage,

in despite of all its pleasurable excitement, for the minister of Tibbermore. Search for him we did, and after many inquiries, with visits to various rinks, we found him. We found him flushed with the exertion he was called on to make in playing his part. He had just cleared the way for a curling-stone, which had been sent on its errand by a skilful hand, using a large broom, with which he had swept the ice clear of every sort of obstruction, and seemed by his gestures and expressions, as well as by the skilful manipulation of the broom, to invite, to solicit, to conjure the missile to come on, and on, and on, to a point which he had, and which he told the stone and all concerned he had, determined in his mind it should reach. The stone, as if under authority, came lazily forward and sulkily stopped. Its handle, ornamented with the silver setting in which it stood, glittered pleasantly to the eyes of the spectator. It had come from no common hand. The minister was in the act of shouldering his broom, and stood watching the next shot, apparently calculating the effect it might have on the issue of the game, when Dr. Forbes gently touched him on the shoulder. He turned toward us and received us affably and kindly, although it was easy to see he could, at the moment, have wished us far enough. As he had received from head-quarters due notice of the mission on which we had come,

and, therefore, had reason to expect such a visit as we now paid him, it did not require that we should occupy much time in explaining the cause of the interruption which we had unhappily given to his present occupation. "O! that was nothing. He could easily be dispensed with, at least for a little." So we held our conversation with a view to make arrangements for a public meeting on our great question in his parish. In his case he told us there were great difficulties. He might calculate on an interdict if he gave the Church, or any place in the power of the heritors. There was no doubt of it. In reply to our representations he said he was desirous to serve our object and to further it in every competent way. He would take it into consideration. He was to be in town next day; he would see us, and let us know what, in the circumstances, he could do. Upon the whole we were satisfied with our interview, and relegated our brother to his game, wishing him victory, not without hope that something more valuable than the enjoyment we had had on the ICE would come out of our visit to Tibbermore.

"Pure, quick, and sportful, is the wholesome day,
But soon elapsed. The horizontal sun,
Broad o'er the south, hangs at his utmost noon,
And, ineffectual strikes the gelid cliff:
His azure gloss the mountain still maintains,
Nor feels the feeble touch. . . . .
. . . . Thick around thunders the sport."

From the ice, having returned to our conveyance awaiting us at the manse, we proceeded to the parish of Moneydie. Mr. John Thomson was minister—the son of Dr. William Thomson, Perth, the nephew of Dr. Andrew Thomson, Edinburgh—a man distinguished for his sound judgment, his lively disposition, his extensive knowledge, his skill in all ecclesiastical matters, his stern fidelity in every good cause, and his deep-seated personal piety. After a pleasant conversation arrangements were easily made for holding a public meeting, and for using all means with his parishioners.

We returned forthwith to Perth, and after a very short season, to recruit our somewhat tried vigour, set out, on foot, to walk to Scone. Scone was Dr. Forbes' native place. His family still resided there. We had been invited to take tea with them, which we did amidst much that was enjoyable, attributed by me to Dr. Forbes' buoyant spirits and his great happiness in being with his relations, who, on their side, seemed to delight in him.

The minister of Scone was but a summer friend. His church could not be at our service for the work in which we were engaged, neither could we have his countenance. But there were friends of our cause at Scone—not the less so that the minister was no friend—earnest and resolute. We

learned that the refusal of all ecclesiastical buildings had had the effect of drawing out the sympathies of an influential farmer in the immediate neighbourhood, who had prepared his barn for our meeting, having had it well cleaned out, thoroughly seated for the occasion, and well lighted. The brother of Mr. Stewart—such was the name of this worthy farmer—was Gaelic minister in Perth. By him our meeting was opened with praise and prayer. The place was crowded with a most respectable-looking body of people of all ages. The two deputies addressed them first, occupying the usual length of time. We were succeeded by Mr. Methven, one of the town-councillors of Perth, who had come to attend our meeting—a warm and intelligent friend of our cause through many years. Our meeting proved enthusiastic and highly successful. A Church Defence Association was formed ere we quitted the fabric; and the people of Scone, perhaps all the more, as I have said, for the indisposition of the minister towards our object, heartily joined our standard. Having partaken of Mr. Stewart's hospitality by supping at his comfortable farm residence, we returned to Perth on foot, arriving in the city soon after midnight. It had been a day of great interest, great excitement, great enjoyment, and successful labour.

Next day was made memorable by the arrival in Perth of Sir James Graham's letter in reply to

our Church's application to Government. The letter was not calculated to encourage us. But this was only what we had learned to expect. Such an answer to our application it was as satisfied us all that our course in preparing for the worst, as we were doing, was wise as well as necessary if the Church of Scotland—the Church of our fathers—in its true principle, in its spirituality, and power for usefulness in the land, was to be preserved. Instead of damping our ardour in the work now being prosecuted by us, it rather stimulated our efforts. All the more for Sir James's letter, manifesting the purpose of Government in regard to our claim, did we urge on the agitation for instructing and awakening the country, firmly believing that therein we did the will of God.

At *one* o'clock (13th January) we went off for Stanley, seven miles away, where we arrived soon after *two*. The minister at Stanley—a *quoad sacra* charge—was Mr. Mather, then a young man in full vigour, and devoted to his ministry. The proprietor of the mills, Mr. Buchanan, was much against us. Mr. Mather's temporal subsistence and comfort depended greatly on Buchanan's favour. That favour he knew he must forfeit if he held by the Church in her present conflict. He did not hesitate. We felt that in his case, with his prospects, his was specially a noble sacrifice. Sacrifice his "all," as the world understands the

word, he did; but never was there a more satisfactory illustration and evidence than in his experience that "whosoever will lose his life for Christ's sake shall find it."

In this locality we held two different meetings. One we addressed at Gilston, about two miles off, and one at Stanley proper. To the former Dr. Forbes repaired; the latter was assigned to me. The assemblage much surprised me, when I considered the unqualified, hostile influences we had to face. Deep interest in the statements I laid before them was shown by a demonstration of sympathy and approval, which I could not misunderstand. The report which Dr. Forbes brought of his Gilston assemblage and the effect of his address corresponded with mine. Much encouraged by our success, and somewhat surprised (our expectations previous to coming not having been high), we returned to Perth at the close of our work, arriving there about midnight.

Next day (Saturday 14th), I went to Aberdalgie, Mrs. Stewart, the excellent wife of the minister, accompanying me. She had come to make sure of me for the pulpit work of next day. Her husband had gone as a deputy, on similar work to our own, to some station in the North, which had been assigned to him as the sphere of his efforts in the good cause. Almost all the ministers whose parishes we visited were for the same reason

absent. Our supplying each other's pulpits became thus an important part of our undertaking.

Having done all the public services of the Sabbath at Aberdalgie, I returned next day to the Fair City. It was Handsel Monday. The country everywhere was astir. Carnival seemed to be universal, a state of matters which effectually prevented our giving ourselves to such efforts as those of previous days. Private visits to friends, in prosecution of our object, was all we could accomplish. We both regretted the interference. Dr. Forbes had preached as I had done on the previous day, and though we might both have been forgiven had we coveted a day's rest, yet no feeling of the kind prevailed in our mind, for we were set on completing what we believed was a great undertaking in the interests of the Church and the kingdom.

Next day saw us fully occupied. Together we, in the first instance, visited the parish of Kilspindie. At Rait we were very kindly received by Mr. Gorrie, factor to Mrs. Stuart of Annat Lodge. Very heartily and *con amore* did he carry out towards us the kind intentions of the excellent lady whom he represented. The schoolhouse at Rait was placed at our disposal, where the two deputies each in succession addressed a company as large as the place could accommodate. Our work here was encouraging and pleasant.

From Rait we proceeded to Errol. Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Grierson was at home. His heart was wholly with us. Although ultimately the adherence in this parish was not so large as, for sake of the good man in charge as well as other reasons, we could have wished, yet on the present occasion the deputies were much cheered by the largeness of the gathering and the good disposition towards them and their cause which was displayed. The minister took part in the services, being warmly received by the respectable company who all but filled the church, our place of meeting. We considered the visit to Errol quite as successful as any of our visits previously made in these quarters.

Our work being concluded at Errol, we were at this point required to separate for a short interval. Dr. Forbes took his departure with the view of proceeding to the parish of Moneydie, whilst I remained at the manse of Errol for the night, preparatory for further effort next day in the neighbourhood.

On Wednesday, 18th January, Mr. Grierson was my companion. We went together, in prosecution of the work in hand, to the parish of Kinfauns. The minister there was Mr. (afterwards Dr.) M'Lagan, a man well known in after years as a distinguished professor of the Aberdeen Free Church College—distinguished for his learning, his taste, his power and elegance as a writer, of which

he has left satisfactory evidence; and for his acceptable and most valuable services in training the youth of our Church for the ministerial work to which they had devoted themselves. Mr. M'Lagan was not at home. Like other clergymen in the neighbourhood he had gone on deputation work such as now occupied us to some district in the North. But though he was absent we suffered nothing thereby either in our personal comfort or the facilities afforded for prosecuting our canvass. By special kind invitation we presented ourselves at Glendoick House on arriving from Errol, a hearty welcome being there awarded us.

Mr. Craigie, the proprietor of Glendoick, was one of those eminent laymen—of whom there was a galaxy—whom God raised up in our land at the era of the Disruption; eminent for their personal piety; eminent for the understanding which He had given to them of the vital questions which engaged all thinking and earnest men at the time; and eminent for the generous, unselfish, and liberal countenance and support extended by them to those who were called to war in the high places of the field. Mr. Craigie was, at the time of which I write, considerably advanced in life, but he was still possessed of much vigour, as also he was filled with great love to the cause of truth for which the Church of his fathers was now

contending. There are still many remaining who can recall Mr. Craigie's venerable form in our General Assembly at its annual meetings, of which he was a member as representative elder year after year till the end of his life.

As in other places in this region, and for the same cause, the use of the Parish Church was not permitted us that we might there address the people. I do not know that we suffered much loss by that. The hospitality with which we were received at Glendoick was not greater than the ardour, most refreshing to my mind, with which accommodation was provided for the audience whom I expected to address. The locality was selected as being suited for the assembling of the people of two parishes—Kinfauns, in which we were, and St. Madoes, lying a little to the south, but adjoining. The place of meeting was a large barn, situated in what was called "Hole of Plean." The barn was fitted up with forms, chairs, resting-places of every sort, gathered principally from the mansion-house, but contributed cheerfully by all the neighbours round about. The young ladies at Glendoick House were the governing, as well as the most laborious, agents on this memorable evening. Their kind efforts and encouraging patronage of us in our work cheered me. I have never forgotten the occasion. It has always presented itself to my mind as a sunny

episode in the history of this fortnight of incessant and pleasurable labour. Mr. Craigie's descendants have followed in the footsteps of their sire. *O! si sic omnes!*

Mr. Noble was minister of St. Madoes, the adjoining parish to that of Kinfauns. He was a Convocation minister, pledged to all that had at that great assemblage been agreed to. A man of amiable character, who had always followed with those who fought in our great battle, he was generally held in high esteem. It had pained many that surmisings had got afloat of his having begun to look askance at the movement in which he had so far aided, and that his ultimate adherence was doubtful. We of the deputation, ignoring the rumour, requested him to come to our help in our meeting at "Hole of Plean." Much relieved and much delighted all were that he responded favourably to our application. He came; was voted into the chair; presided over the meeting accordingly; and in a most energetic, clearly conceived, thorough speech, declared his adherence to us, and his sympathy with us, exhorting his hearers—many of his own flock—to cast in their lot with the Church. After his address the time remaining was left to me. I occupied it with such statements as I was in the habit of making. A short speech from Mr. Grierson confirming all I had said, brought

to a close one of the happiest of our many meetings, on this occasion, within the bounds of the Presbytery of Perth. I rested for the night at Glendoick House, where the kindness conferred on me formed a good preparation for further labours on the morrow. When that came I was conveyed to Perth in the carriage of my generous host.

Mr. Noble's appearance among us caused joy to many. As being apparently the fruit of the deputation visit we had much credit awarded us. For a time we all rejoiced, but the end did not justify the present satisfaction. Under what influence nobody could certainly say, but fail us when the crash came poor Noble did. All who knew him mourned over it, chiefly for his own sake. He never was to his old friends or to society what he had been. It was said to have affected his health. However that might be he did not long survive our Disruption. We all believed that a happier man he would have been had he continued with us. Some men there were, at the era of the catastrophe, whose defection was not less, perhaps was more inconsistent and blameworthy than that of this man of quiet spirit; but these men were made of grosser material than he, and could withstand without shrinking, as he could not, the silent contempt of what some might call a harshly judging world.

Taking a little rest on the 19th—the day following the "Hole of Plean" meeting—I proceeded in the afternoon from Perth to Moneydie, there to rejoin Dr. Forbes for the prosecution of our undertaking. Night work ours behoved to be for the most part, without respect to the localities to which duty called us. During daylight we could not have the people to attend. Night work in towns and in places of easy access we enjoyed. Not so much so in other circumstances, as when, on this evening, we required to perform, amidst January winds, the journey from the manse of Moneydie to the far away wilds of Logiealmond. Accompanied by our host, the minister of Moneydie, to that bleak land we proceeded after having dinner at the manse. Tea, most welcome to us, was on the table, in prospect of our arrival, when we reached the dwelling of Mr. Watson, then missionary in that region; now the esteemed, able, and useful minister of our Free Church at Ratho. The meeting was held in the Church; it was crowded in every part. Mr. Thomson presided, opening and closing the services appropriately, and in most edifying form. We were all encouraged. Twelve o'clock saw us back to the manse of Moneydie, under which hospitable roof we passed the night. We were beginning to get enamoured of our itinerant life. After the first speeches, at the outset of our career, inasmuch as

we usually went over the same ground on each successive occasion, no burden of preparation rested on our minds. We were at the same time conscious of improving in our addresses as we went on, and soon came to believe that, if our practice continued long enough, we might become distinguished public orators.

I return to Tibbermore to narrate the fruit of our negotiations on the frozen surface of the curling pond. Mr. Tulloch had not forgotten his arrangement with us. The Church could not be given; the schoolhouse could not be given; and such reasons were assigned as we were bound to accept. Failure in that matter had the effect, as we had found in other similar instances, of bringing to our aid friends whose zeal and practical value to our cause might, had the case been otherwise, have remained unknown. Two such friends were Mr. Turnbull, of Hungtingtower, and Mr. M'Laggan, of Ruthven House, Mr. Turnbull's near neighbour, and an heritor of the parish. Dr. Forbes and I were to be the guests of Mr. Turnbull at Huntingtower. We had come from the manse of Moneydie to his house. To him, also, we were to be indebted for our place of meeting. On the day on which it was held we dined at the house of Mr. M'Laggan, the company assembled including Mr. Tulloch, Mr. Gray of Perth, Mr. Methven our Scone friend, with the two deputies. Mr.

M'Laggan, our host, was during the years of his life—a life all too short—an intelligent, ardent, and serviceable supporter of our cause. Before the change came he was always ready, as on the present occasion, by all means in his power to forward our great object. No man had a deeper appreciation of the responsibility resting on the country at large, to give countenance and support such as he and others like him gave, to our contention. Not as a partisan, not in the spirit of sectarianism (no one could be more free of such infirmities), did he come to our side; but as a man fully informed; knowing the bearings of our principles on the true interests of the commonwealth; desiring to do the duty of a good patriot and at the same time the duty of a friend of spiritual religion in the land.

Mr. Turnbull, through a long life, was the devoted, generous supporter and advocate of our views. He occupied a place in the front ranks of the highly honoured laymen with whom God has so greatly blessed us in all our course hitherto. He and his partner in life seemed to set value on their position in society, their worldly substance, their influence in every form, as they might be employed for their Lord and Master in heaven. That they saw in our now struggling bands, and subsequently in our Free Church, what they believed to be the representation of a living testimony to

truth which they were bound, in fealty to Him, to espouse and maintain, was as gratifying to us as, no doubt, it proved beneficial to themselves as servants of Him whom they loved. Few men have gone down to the grave in our times with a more honourable name for godly simplicity, sincerity, exemplary consistency, manly decision, unsullied integrity, and unbounded liberality than Mr. Turnbull of Huntingtower.

The place which he put at our disposal for the Tibbermore meeting was unique. Perhaps had an architect been asked previously to inspect the structure, and to report on its efficiency and security in prospect of the pressure to which it might be subjected, we should have been sent elsewhere for present accommodation. Our good friend the proprietor, as he told us afterwards, had misgivings, but not serious fears. The thought which chiefly gave him assurance was that not a large, only a small, audience was to be expected, the district being unfavourable to us. The place of meeting was a mill, appropriated to some species of manufacture. The highest flat, some stories up, was assigned to us on this occasion. It was a large, wide, low-roofed apartment of great length, partially fitted up, for us, with forms, chairs, &c., the upper end being furnished with a green-covered table, and suitable accommodation for the chairman with the friends who from this platform

were to make their speeches. This garret apartment (for such it was) was reached by a narrow winding staircase, certainly never intended to serve the purpose of affording means of ascent or descent to a crowding body of people. When we entered on our ascent I confess to having contemplated with some little anxiety the frail-looking cast-iron pillars on which the fabric rested. It did occur to my mind that if a crowd came, and if they should sway hither and thither, even in the least (a thing not unlikely), it might not be very pleasant for us nor favourable to the success of our meeting. We went resolutely up, however. I know not whether the other friends felt anxiety as I did; but the sight which presented itself as we advanced through the assemblage was one that for the time drove every consideration from our mind but that of the work in hand. We had, unexpectedly, a large gathering, and we were bound to use our opportunity well. The place being but dimly lighted, it was not without difficulty we made our way to the extemporized platform.

Mr. Tulloch occupied the chair. He made a good speech in favour of our movement, and of the truths, generally, we were striving to protect. His statement was clear and effective; but we observed that he did not commit himself to the carrying out of the advocacy and preservation of the truths in question in the form we pro-

posed to do. On that head he said nothing. Otherwise we were gratified with his address. The speakers who followed were the two deputies, and Mr. Andrew Gray, who, in summing up, made in a short speech one of his happiest appearances of the kind. I think the speaking this evening was all good, perhaps the best we had hitherto had in our peregrinations. The good effect on the audience was manifest, and the results proved our happy success on the occasion. We all got safely down from our elevation. No excitement was occasioned by any indiscreet warning. The people were wisely left to their own good sense, so no disaster or misadventure of any kind occurred. I remember how Mr. Turnbull, when it was all comfortably past, took my hand, declaring that he had never felt more thankful to a merciful Providence for protection, preservation, and deliverance from evil in any case. When he explained the risks to which we had been exposed we were all made equally thankful. Many a time in after days did Mr. Turnbull recall the *mill loft* meeting, with all its interesting details. It was an adventure not to be forgotten.

We saw no more of Mr. Tulloch. That he presided on this occasion we considered to be of importance. That he did not follow with us—that when the day of trial came he was not found by our side—however lamented for his sake, was

no surprise to any who knew all circumstances connected with his case. He broke no pledge. He had never so identified himself with our movement as to justify an accusation of direct tergiversation, though we might allege that he ought, looking to all his previous course, to have appeared in Tanfield Hall on 18th May, 1843. Mr. Tulloch's time in the world after this was not long. Being called to cross the Atlantic, the ship in which he sailed from Liverpool was never afterwards heard of. All on board perished at sea.

The concluding service of our deputation in the Presbytery of Perth was held at Abernethy, and was one of considerable interest. Our brother, the parish minister, was hostile. He had much influence with his parishioners, all of whom, however, were not hostile. The parish church and the parish school-house were of course refused us. A farmer, Mr. Glas, knowing this, prepared his barn in view of our meeting. The use of it was superseded by the handsome offer by the minister of the Secession Church of his place of worship—the church of Moncrieff, one of the first fathers of the body who were the earliest separatists from the Revolution Establishment. Where this great man preached more than a hundred years before we assembled this evening. The meeting was large and enthusiastic. Both deputies endeavoured to show the identity, in the large leading principle,

of the cause for which the Erskines and Moncrieffs of the earlier time contended and suffered, with that on the merits of which we were now making our appeal everywhere to our countrymen. We endeavoured to show, also, that throughout the history of the Church of Scotland the contention had been the same—a contention for liberty to serve God as the only Lord of the conscience—that which secured the two great duties of rendering unto God the things that are His and unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. We made our appeal to all classes of the community, and boldly maintained that to yield in the present crisis of the history of our country would be to prove unfaithful to all her past history and the distinctive glory of that history. We had a most hearty response from the large assemblage, many of whom crowded round Dr. Forbes and myself as we were leaving the old structure, shaking us most heartily by the hand. Well treated by our lay friends as to our bodily comforts, we afterwards found our way back to Perth, arriving there amidst the "small hours."

Our task for the present was completed. It had been with us a season of enjoyment and refreshing. We experienced that it had been good for our spiritual interests personally to have been engaged as we had been. The thought that we were a detachmeut of a large army, a limited representa-

tion of the many who, all over the land, were at the same time with us occupied in the same onerous undertaking, was never absent from our minds.

Ere I here take leave of the visitation at this time of the Perth Presbytery, I must indulge myself with a few words on the admiration I then felt, and still continue to cherish, for the conduct and bearing of the ministers' wives. The ministers themselves were hearty and resolute. Their wives were full of enthusiasm, and set little by the prospect of the change in their circumstances which they were called to contemplate. When I looked on the snug smiling manses—when I reflected on the associations which bound them and their families to them—when I remembered that they had no prospect before them but comparative poverty for the future of their earthly course—and when I listened to their earnest expressions of hope that nothing would induce the Church to swerve from its faithfulness, I could not but feel persuaded that God had, in a wonderful way, endowed them with grace for this great occasion, and made them helpmeets indeed for their suffering but resolute husbands. I have often said, that if commemorative monuments be lawful for any object, the wives of the ministers of the Disruption of 1843 deserve one—magnificent and perennial. The extent to which I honour and respect them I

cannot express. Had they faltered, had they even been lukewarm, they would not have changed the purpose or course of those to whom they stood in so close and sacred a relation; but they would have made their trial far more grievous. As the case was, they encouraged their husbands' hearts, brightening the future with animating hopes and happy anticipations. Come what might, the wives were prepared to meet all hazards for the sake of the glory of their Lord and Saviour. None were more marked for this than the wives of the ministers of the Presbytery of Perth. May their memory be blessed!

> "Both in one faith unanimous though sad,
> With cause for evils past, yet much more cheered
> With meditation on the happy end."

To what extent female adherence to the interests of our Church, both when established and when no longer so—an adherence distinguished by such a wonderful amount of effort, effort crowned always with such success—may be traced to the example and influence of the wives and daughters of the manse, I will not take upon me to say. But that such example and influence were mighty, every one cognisant of the facts belonging to the time will be ready to acknowledge; and, moreover, that the usefulness of the agency thereby evoked has not ceased, but rather has increased, year after year, until the present time. I delight thus to

record what I know other ministers of those times can fully sympathize in, each in his own case, adding my personal testimony, how much my heart was cheered, how much my hands were strengthened, how much my toils were lightened and my hopes supported, by this most grateful element of aid.

On Sabbath 22d January, Dr. Forbes preached at Moneydie. I preached at Dunbarney. So we concluded our tour of ecclesiastical agitation. On Monday we returned to our homes.

SECTION III.

Sir James Graham's letter—Further Deputation Work—Gourock—St. Columba, Glasgow, Mr. M'Gilivray and others—Kincardine, Thornhill—City Hall, Glasgow, Dr. Guthrie and others—Airth—Dunblane, Mr. M'Kenzie—Denny, Mr. Dempster, Mr. M'Culloch—Callander, Mr. Robertson, minister, Mr. M'Laren, Surgeon M'Nab—Application from the Parish to Government, fate thereof—Prince Leopold and Mr. M'Laren, the Prince Consort—Alloa, meeting—Bridge of Allan.

Sir James Graham's letter, which we had reason to believe was written by Duncan M'Neil, then Lord Advocate, afterwards Lord President of the Court of Session, ultimately the Scottish lawlord in the House of Peers—this letter, and following its appearance the decision in the Stewarton case, put the copestone on the measures taken by the Civil Power to destroy the liberties of the Church. Both came upon Dr. Forbes and myself during our labours in Perthshire. We were perplexed, but not in despair. In the darkness we had one comfort, the comfort of being no longer left in doubt, supposing we were honest and desired to act honestly, as to the only course open to the Church. It was now made clear,

should no change come over the mind of the Government, that if we would have, for ourselves, the liberty of a Church of Christ, liberty to carry out His mind as expressed in His Word, we must seek it, and we could be permitted to enjoy it, only in a non-established condition, only apart from State connection, only in a region where State legislation and court of civil law decisions could not reach us in the administration of the purely spiritual affairs of the Church; or, if they did reach us in some form, where the conscience would be free to resist and to disobey. We aimed at no unlawful independence of State control. In all that was competent to civil rule, that is, in all civil matters, we were under law to God for what was due to civil Government, as His appointed agency. So, also, we were under law to God for what was due to the glory of His name—bound not to permit it to be dishonoured by secular, ignorant, and presumptuous assumption as it was in the case of Uzziah, whom the priests' testimony and God's manifest judgment both reproved when he passed beyond his proper jurisdiction, as king of Israel, and intruded into another domain, that of the King of the spiritual Sion.

By Sir James Graham's letter it was made clear that the decisions of the civil courts against our claims were homologated by Government, and were to become statute law. By the Stewarton

decision, which would be homologated as the others had been, it was made clear that, being the Church of the State, we were no more at liberty to extend the spiritual services proper to the Church, according to the necessities of the population, ever growing; no more at liberty to give to ministers, regularly licensed, called, and ordained, the power of exercising discipline in their congregations, or the right of self-government in association with their brethren, without the permission and sanction of civil law. This fetter was added to all the previous ones. What more could we ask to make our position palpable, or what more could honest men wait for to determine their purpose of accepting the imposed condition, of bidding farewell to a relationship which involved an iniquity that, from the days of the apostles, the true Church had repudiated, ever inscribing on her banner, the sign by which she was to conquer:—"WE OUGHT TO OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN?" Under the affliction our appeal was to Him, our trust was in Him.

> "The darkest night will turn to day,
> Its fearful phantoms fade away,
> If thou the gulf illume."

My appointment as one of the many deputies sent forth over the country at this time gave me, as I imagined, a general commission, and seemed to invest me with a function which I was bound

to use, as opportunity offered, in the cause so much in the heart of the many thousands of my countrymen, both in the south and north. Opportunities were offered; and I continue my narrative, offering some sketches of my proceedings in meeting these on until the eve of the great separation, premising that such opportunities were in no case solicited by me.

In the month of February, not long after my return from the Presbytery of Perth agitation, I took part in two meetings in furtherance of our great object. The first of these was at Gourock, where both apathy and ignorance on the state of matters prevailed. In the Church there a crowded audience met me to hear my exposition and to judge of the merits of the cause I advocated. Here, as at other places visited by me, I had the satisfaction of being assured that a view of matters had been communicated not previously possessed, and that prejudices once formidable were happily removed. The issue in the formation of a strong Free Church congregation in this town showed that this meeting, and other means besides, had not been without good fruit.

The second meeting was held in Glasgow, in Hope Street Church—the Church of which I had once been minister, the first minister who had been settled there. The meeting was not in behalf of the Hope Street congregation. Mr. (now Dr.)

M'Gilvray, of Aberdeen, was then minister. Under his training his people required no stimulus, such as was being so extensively applied in other congregations. The meeting was held in behalf of a body of people connected with another Gaelic congregation but a little way removed from Hope Street. Dr. Norman M'Leod, father of the late Dr. Norman, editor of *Good Words*, was minister of St. Columba Gaelic Church. I need scarcely say that very hostile was the old gentleman to the present movement, as he had always been to the party whose adherence to the great principles of the Church of Scotland, and whose conflicts for these with the civil courts in their attempt to sweep them out of sight, had brought on the present difficulties. No ray of non-intrusion light was permitted to penetrate the precincts of St. Columba. What newspapers taught was known to some of those who gathered within its walls, but no explanations had ever been given and no discussions had been permitted. A portion of the congregation rebelled. They asked that they might have the privilege of other congregations. They asked that there should be information, exposition, discussion. This was refused. They took steps to meet the refusal; they resolved to have a meeting expressly for the benefit of the congregation of St. Columba. Hope Street Church was freely granted for this purpose. The minister

readily consented to preside. A small selection of friends whom they desired to hear were requested to give their services on the occasion. I was one of those selected. My principal colleague was Mr. Duncan, then minister at Kirkintilloch, afterwards at Newcastle. Mr. M'Gilvray made an able statement from the chair. He was followed by Mr. Duncan and myself with speeches in which, certainly, we did not mince matters. Not that the discussion was all on one side or of one character. The meeting had been called in behalf of St. Columba Church, and whilst they were the party of progress there who had produced it and whose views were expected to be set forth and expounded, others in the congregation, holding different views, were not excluded or debarred speech. We had opposition, vigorous opposition, accordingly. All the more successful were we for that. Some personalities for a moment produced irritation, but this speedily passed. Triumphant answers were given to all objections and unwarrantable averments. The success was complete. All that was expected to be gained by the meeting was accomplished. The malcontents in St. Columba were gratified. They were confirmed in the purpose which they had conditionally formed, and ultimately became Free Churchmen. Had there not been an express and pressing invitation we should not have attempted to invade

such a stronghold of *Moderatism* as Dr. Norman's congregation was known to be. We did not act ultroneously in this instance of agitation. Under the circumstances we, the speakers, felt no difficulty in responding to the application which came to us. Now and in some other instances the cry of unbrotherliness was raised, and statements were made to the effect that the disturbing of quiet and contented congregations, introducing such an element of strife as our great question uniformly proved to be, was unjustifiable. This had little weight with us, as we believed that no portion of the community should be left in ignorance, if we could help it, of the wicked proceedings against the cause of Christ in our land which were being pursued at the instance, or by the connivance, of our civil rulers. We had the consolation of being able to think that better men than we had long ago been denounced when serving the same cause as men who "turned the world upside down." Light invading darkness, truth coming into collision with error, must ever produce such effects. The offence cannot fail to come, but blessed are they who are not thereby offended in Christ.

Some days after this Glasgow meeting, when I had, on the Monday of the communion, preached at Dunblane, I proceeded to the west to Thornhill, having been invited there by friends who were

much in the same condition with the Glasgow St. Columba truth-seekers—the ministers of Thornhill and the neighbouring parish of Kincardine being both hostile to our movement. There, as in many other places, the opposition—the efforts to prevent discussion—took such a form as roused the minds of the intelligent and the thoughtful, setting them to devise methods by which instruction should reach them, all the more that the attempt to exclude the light was seen to be systematically pursued. The spirit of inquiry had been largely evoked at Thornhill and in the surrounding neighbourhood. The meeting was packed to the doors, waiting eagerly for my arrival. I stepped from the conveyance to the platform, and made a long, full statement, receiving hearty thanks. At a very late hour, through the dark night, I got to my home at Stirling.

Early in the month of March a "Youths' Association" in aid of our "Provisional Committee" which had its seat in Edinburgh, was organized in the city of Glasgow. A public meeting in furtherance of their object, and, generally, for discussing the subject which was then everywhere occupying the country, was held in the City Hall—the place of most extensive accommodation for the purpose which could be had. It was intended to be a great *demonstration*, and it proved to be so. The speakers were Dr. Guthrie,

Dr. Begg, Mr. Chalmers—then of Dailly, now Professor Chalmers, London—Mr. Duncan, of Kirkintilloch, and myself. The meeting was as large as the hall could admit, the speaking was exceedingly effective, and the reception given to all the speakers was enthusiastic. Very clear it was made that not, under any circumstances nor for any consideration, could those who undertook to serve Christ in the gospel accept or permit any government in that matter but His own, according to the order instituted by Himself and clearly revealed to us in His Word, if they fulfilled His will. Very clear it was made that, on Scripture authority, the Church has a jurisdiction of her own assigned to her—a government, in all things referring to the propagation of the gospel, whether for the conversion of the unsaved or the edification and advancement in divine life of those who are saved, to be exercised by office-bearers, being distinct from those who exercise rule in civil or ordinary temporal matters. And not less clear was it made to the vast audience, that, as the said civil rulers have power over all temporalities, to them it belongs to declare whether they will admit and allow the use of this privilege, whilst they bestow the means of support to those who exercise the spiritual function. In our case it was shown that we had a constitutional right that they should admit and allow the spiritual

independence referred to; yet, at the same time, it was not denied that they had really the *power* —a power which we could not resist, however unlawfully and unjustly employed—to change the law and refuse to continue in the relation to the Church which, we held, they had heretofore occupied. Very clear, accordingly, it was made, that to be free to serve Christ in the gospel in our country we must look elsewhere for sustenance, and so must dissolve our connection with the State, protesting against their violation, as we held it, of constitutional law, as well as their violation of the law of the God of all the earth, to whom rulers, as rulers, and all men in their respective capacities, are under obligation to forward the interests of the gospel, which are the interests of TRUTH, in every competent way.

A meeting at Airth in this month also—small compared with the Glasgow meeting, but not less enthusiastic—resulted in the formation of a congregation, a people who in due time built themselves a church by aid especially furnished by a friend, Mr. Whytelaw, now of London. Airth has always been one of the stations of the Free Church. The parish minister, a co-presbyter, was one of those who marched boldly in line with other soldiers of the Cross in our army until we came in sight of the shotted batteries of the civil power, and who then, believing that discretion is

the better part of valour, chose to retire from the field—in the rear sometimes helping the enemy by their ill-starred proceedings. They were not *very* numerous. Still they were numerous enough to bring much discredit on our country and on religion.

Yet again, in this month of March, I addressed meetings at Gargunnock and Kippen. In the former parish the minister had recently been taken away by death. Mr. Laurie, a man of singular simplicity, sincerity, and devotedness to what is good, had always dealt faithfully with his people in reference to the Church question, and among them the agitation now employed met with a hearty, ready response. At Kippen, through the hostility of the heritors, the church was denied me. As in other cases this roused the people, and secured for me in another place a larger audience than, perhaps, had they not interfered, I should have had. Mr. Anderson, the minister, was heartily with the Church in her present movement. A man of tender conscience, and of upright, devoted faithfulness, he joined me in the services of the evening I passed at Kippen—services which were crowned with success very gratifying to us all. Congregations, which were numbered with the other congregations of the Free Church when the time came, were the result of the effort put forth in both localities, Gargunnock and Kippen.

Dunblane followed the two parishes I have named. There the agitation, as the subsequent result showed, was singularly successful. The minister, Mr. William M'Kenzie, had been the leader of the Presbytery of Auchterarder in the great "Auchterarder case." It was he who made the motion the following out of which led to the consummation which shook the kingdom as well as the Church to its centre—a consummation which still produces "shakings" of the symbolical "heavens and earth," whose termination will be a new order of things in both; for "He who cometh shall come"—shall receive His own, and shall then be King of all. M'Kenzie entertained high views of the solemn character of the events through which we were passing. His study of the book of prophecy throughout led to this. If his expositions were at the time believed to be extreme and unique, events, his friends may think, have greatly justified them. In any case they led to an intensity both of resolution and action all his own. Throughout life he proved both an able and persistent friend of truth in our land and elsewhere. At Dunblane the results of our agitation were all we could desire. That parish has ever been one of the strong points in our national Free Church.

The parish of Denny follows in my list of places visited with a view to instruct the people, and to rouse them into earnestness of mind in the

cause I had in hand. Here, of all the localities with which I dealt, I had the least success. Two causes produced this. Mr. Dempster, the minister of the parish, was far advanced in life. The vigour of early years was gone. His colleague, Mr. M'Culloch, minister at Haggs, a *quoad sacra* church, under a specious profession of adherence to our cause, was very earnestly though secretly opposed. There was a counterwork on his part, very adroitly managed, which neutralized all effort in the right direction; and although a congregation was ultimately formed at Denny, that locality never became to the Free Church what might have been expected. Mr. Dempster and Mr. M'Culloch, after consultation together, had in November, agreed to meet at the CONVOCATION, that they might there, as of one mind themselves, act in concert with their brethren. Mr. Dempster attended, as had been arranged, much urged to do so by the other. Mr. M'Culloch forgot his engagement, and never made his appearance in fulfilment thereof. Some explanations were given to satisfy for the nonce the good old man. The Disruption came; then as soon as Mr. Dempster had signed the Deed of Demission, and formal notice had been given of the vacancy to the patron, Mr. M'Culloch received the presentation to the parish of Denny. Some such instances occurred at the time of our trial—a trial which, as might have been expected, tested men's

characters, and sometimes revealed them in painful lights. Mr. M'Culloch became a distinguished man in the Establishment after 1843. He was presented to one or two parishes in succession in other districts of the country. His promotion was rapid and great. Ultimately he went abroad, and the world lost sight of him.

CALLANDER comes next in order in my history of this work of agitation in the spring preceding the Assembly of 1843. It will require a more detailed narrrative than some of the cases already described.

The minister of the parish, Mr. Robertson, had always been of the Evangelical party in our Church. He was much respected as a worthy, well-doing, easy-going, and influential country gentleman. His preaching powers were not high; but weight of character, county influence, and wealth, set him in a position, the value of which all friends felt and were ready to acknowledge. He had not instructed his people in the knowledge of the principles for which the Church was contending and suffering. Indeed, I am not sure that he had ever himself apprehended, or that he cared to apprehend them.

As the parish was isolated (the days of railways had not then arrived, the engine whistle had not as yet awakened the echoes of Loch Lubnaig valley), and as the people were primitive, also conservative, not in the best sense, little more than

distant reports, and indistinct intimations of the struggle in progress elsewhere had at any time reached them. In the village of Callander there were a few inquiring spirits, whom, I dare say, liberal views in politics had, in the first instance, roused to attend to the great question, but whom higher influences subsequently animated and guided. They read the newspapers—not then daily publications; so knew something of what was going on. They desired to know more, and they desired particularly to have the advantage which all other localities were at the time having, of hearing the representations made, in name of the Church, by the deputations commissioned thereanent. At the head of the reformers of Callander was Mr. Alexander M'Nab, the surgeon of the village and parish, a shrewd, well-informed, and much trusted friend of progress. To a great extent he was the man of the people, and he led them. For this the aristocracy frowned on him. M'Nab cared little for that.

Guided by him, the people approached the minister to ask that he should obtain for them a visit of one of the deputations. The truth was, that the deputation which had been appointed to visit Callander had offered to the minister a visit, such as they were paying in other parishes, and he had declined it. He did not wish to disturb his people, or to have any agitation. Out of false delicacy

the deputation desisted from executing their commission, and directed their steps elsewhere. Thus the risk arose, that no movement, such as had been contemplated for all Scotland, was to be known in Callander. In these circumstances a communication was addressed to me, though quite unknown in my ministerial character to the inhabitants and parishioners except by report, to ascertain whether I would, on my own responsibility, the case being as I have described, come to Callander on such a mission as they knew had carried me to other places? I agreed without hesitation to go, if they formally invited me, and if they opened the way for me. My acquaintance with the minister was very slight; but though it had been greater I would not on that account have been prevented from undertaking the duty set before me. A formal application soon came to hand. An evening in the month of April was fixed as the time for holding the projected meeting. Travelling in an open conveyance, I arrived at Callander at six o'clock. The parish church was, of course, shut against me. There was no public hall in the village. In this emergency the friends who had invited me—they were not numerous, got admission to what had once been a chapel of the Independent body, a small place on the banks of the beautiful stream which traces its way close to the town into the picturesque valley to the

west beyond. Full notice had been given of my coming—a new and strange event as some thought. Those who desired to hear what I had to say were invited to assemble there. The house was filled to suffocation. All round the doors, and at the windows, the hearers clustered. Beginning with praise and prayer, I addressed them at great length; expounded all our views; defended our position; exposed the misrepresentations of it which were so industriously propagated; and made known the intention of the Church, looking to the future, should our claim be finally rejected, a result on which we fully calculated. My statement in chief was made in the English language; but seeing in the faces of my hearers an earnest yearning for "the other language," I heartily indulged them, alternating in both tongues, as I perceived the case required, and as I calculated might best secure the sympathy of all. The use of the Gaelic had a magical effect. As the wild Irish believe that no one who can speak their national tongue can be unsound in the national faith, the Highlanders of Callander evidently believed all the more in my statements when delivered in their own tongue. It greatly affected them to be made to know (what they had not previously realized), that the QUESTION was not a mere Low country one, but was quite as much Highland; and not a minister's question only, but a people's

question. More than two hours were occupied with this service. A very short conversation with some of the leading people among the audience followed. Then, getting into my conveyance, thankful for the evident success so far of my visit, I returned to Stirling at a late hour not a little worn out.

The action following what I had done at Callander was prompt. Within an hour after I had quitted the village a committee was formed, with a view to take measures for a formal union with the Non-intrusion (Free Church) party. By next forenoon some £60 was subscribed, raised, and lodged in bank. A correspondence was opened with me. I had great pleasure in becoming the medium of communication on their behalf with the central authorities in Edinburgh; all the usual printed documents (and they were many), with lithographed designs of churches, &c., were provided for them. In less than a fortnight they were fairly embarked on the same sea, in the same fleet, partakers in the same enterprise, with all the friends of truth—of our truth—in Scotland.

The end of this part of my story is amusing. When the minister was informed of my daring and unwarrantable intrusion into his parish he declared that if he had hold of me he would horsewhip me! But the honest man's wrath soon evaporated. What had occurred—the flame was spreading in the parish—brought him to a point,

that which, his friends said, he had throughout contemplated. His purpose had been, in case a disruption of the Church took place, not to continue a minister of the Establishment, as it should then be constituted. His purpose, moreover, had been not to become a minister of the Free Church. He now resolved to carry into effect what he had previously made up his mind to adopt as his course in the contemplated altered circumstances which he believed were at hand. He resolved to resign his charge; to do so at once, that a new and acceptable minister being timeously settled in his place, the Free Church movement should so either be paralyzed or prevented. He carried out his purpose. The parish of Callander became vacant. Mr. Robertson's resignation was accepted by the Presbytery of the bounds.

In the village of Callander there lived at this time, in the very height of his influence, a very remarkable man, of whom I shall have more to say in this chapter of autobiography. Mr. DONALD M'LAREN was a Highlander of the Celtic type. He had begun the world as a small farmer and drover. In course of time he added to this, private banking. Of very superior wisdom and sagacity, prudence and frugality, and withal distinguished for benevolence and hospitality, he had established himself in the affections of all who knew him, and possessed almost unlimited influ-

ence in both town and parish—influence purely the result of the confidence all men reposed in him. He had not been bred in schools and colleges; his genius, which served him well in all things, rendered him independent of more than ordinary scholarship; and he had risen to affluence without ostentation, exercising his generous disposition in ways most unpretending.

Mr. M'Laren was the warm friend of the minister; he was also his chief counsellor. A wiser, or more far-seeing counsellor, the minister could not have had. Deeply sympathizing with him in his strong feeling against me, and disapproving of the interference of which he counted I had been culpably guilty, his advice, as was believed, guided Mr. Robertson to choose the course which he did in this emergency. Judging on ordinary principles, it was the wisest which could have been devised with a view to defeat, or at least to neutralize, the Free Church objects. Both friends believed that an application to Government—the Crown being patron of the parish—by the friends who adhered to the prosecuting party in the Church, and to the civil courts in their action against the Church, would, under the special circumstances which had evolved, obtain from high quarters what would ostensibly be the privilege of electing a minister by the voice of the people, with their consent, or at least not in oppo-

sition to their desires. So would they have an opportunity of showing that the future of the Establishment was not to be one of bondage in this respect. I had in my address dwelt strongly on the evil in this line, which was to be anticipated; on the entire disregard of the will or wishes of the people that might be looked forward to in all such matters, if Government carried out its purpose, as already was but too clearly made known they intended to do. The two friends at Callander wished to demonstrate, wished to satisfy the people there, that such a view was unfounded; that Government would have respect to the desires of the parishioners; and that they would certainly be allowed to have a minister who should virtually be their own choice. A triumph was certainly anticipated. Very considerable political influence could be brought to bear on the Home Secretary and his colleagues. In this condition of things no wonder though the reforming party in the village were dismayed, and the other party proportionally elated.

A formal communication was addressed to the Home Secretary, drawn up with great care after much deliberation. It set forth, generally, the state of ecclesiastical Scotland at the time, and particularly the state of Callander. It dwelt on the vast importance of a favourable answer to their application, looking to the country at large, before matters went further in the direction in

which they were then running. The application included a distinct proposal. The parishioners of Callander would be glad to receive from Government, as patron, a *list* of three candidates, one of whom they pledged themselves to accept as their future minister, after having heard them all preach, so having an opportunity afforded them of judging of their respective qualifications; or alternatively, they were prepared to furnish to Government (the patron) the names of three ministers, any one of whom they would accept as their future minister, when he received the presentation from the Home Office according to law. Either alternative, if adopted by the patron, would have involved, though in a meagre way, a virtual election by the people—at least a voice equal in potency to that of the *Veto* Law, not yet repealed. The whole country side was painfully awake awaiting the reply to this document.

No great delay took place. A letter from the Home Office acknowledged receipt of the communication in the usual courtly phraseology; announced that no official intimation of the vacancy in the parish of Callander had been made to Government; and, further, that when such intimation should be made, the Government would know how to exercise its patronage in appointing a minister, without the counsel or intervention of the memorialists!

Here was a most unexpected rebuff. They were confounded. This feeling, however, was soon subdued. The parties with whom those in high places thus dealt were not incapable of appreciating the strange folly of such a communication at such a time, or of understanding what it augured; nor were they indisposed to take up a position in which they could do justice to themselves, and at the same time secure, beyond reach of all such unwise and high-handed policy as had just stung them, rights and privileges which they could not abandon.

"Ah!" said Mr. M'Laren, "Beith is right after all! He told the people that they might expect to be treated as we have now been. Our course cannot be doubtful; it must be a decided one." The speaker was not a man of many words. A short interval past, he sought the leaders of the Free Church movement in the village, who knew nothing then of the reply received from Government. "What progress have you made in this Free Church undertaking of yours?" They frankly told him all. The beginning, they acknowledged, was small, but, small as it was, their hope was good. "Our great difficulty," they said, "at present, is to obtain a site on which we may build our Church." "That ought not to be a difficulty in this wide country," casting his eyes round on the landscape as he spoke; "and it will

no longer be your difficulty." He asked to see the design of their future church which they had adopted in view of building. A Tanfield Hall sketch was produced—simple enough, but of the kind which was then, especially in the poorer localities, very generally chosen by the people for the accommodation which they should require when compelled to abandon the places of worship in which they and their fathers in past generations had worshipped. Mr. M'Laren invited his wondering auditors to meet him next morning, and to bring with them implements for digging. They did so, filled with thankfulness for the light which had thus been shed on their path. The SITE was granted, a gift, and on easy conditions. It was the beautiful spot on which the Free Church of Callander now stands, close to the river, and in the immediate vicinity of the Chapel where the meeting was held at which was inaugurated the movement that had this happy termination. To the gift of the site Mr. M'Laren added a contribution to the funds of the local committee of £200. Thus it was all joy and gladness in the hearts of the friends of the suffering Church at Callander.

I shall have other things connected with my narrative to record of Mr. M'Laren. In what I have already stated I have, for sake of the continuity of my story touching the visit to this

locality, gone ahead somewhat. I may be forgiven if I diverge yet a little more whilst I afford my readers an opportunity of judging of the unique character of the remarkable man whom I have introduced to them. They may already surmise that he was of large and generous thoughts, glad to embrace opportunities of exercising his virtues in this direction. To such men opportunities are sure to come.

Prince Leopold—the husband of the Princess Charlotte, daughter of George IV., afterwards king of Belgium, the uncle of our present most gracious sovereign Victoria—was a guest at Drummond Castle several years before the date of my story. Lord Willoughby, the proprietor of the castle, whose tenant Mr. M'Laren was, devised, in the exercise of his generous hospitality, many methods of gratifying the prince, or of showing his desire to do so. Among other methods he sought to introduce him to some of the grand and picturesque scenery of the country, especially on his own lands. Mr. M'Laren was informed that he might expect to be honoured by a visit of Leopold, accompanied by his host—a visit, not at Callander but at Glenartny, one of the farms which he held from Lord Willoughby. Our friend had on his farm a decently furnished tenant's house, which he occasionally occupied when he retired for temporary relaxation from

the labours of his business. The prospect of the visit greatly delighted him. He welcomed it with the sincerity of hospitable sentiment. Great preparations were, accordingly, made for receiving in becoming style the illustrious personages who were to visit the glen. No cost was spared. The best taste was shown in all the arrangements. Lord Willoughby when he arrived with his guests at Glenartny was taken by surprise. All that he had asked or expected was his tenant's presence at home to direct the royal party to the best points of view on his possessions. His lordship's desire in this was gratified, as also was his purpose to make everything pleasant to his illustrious visitors. The sumptuous *dejeuné* generously provided for them was heartily partaken of. The day was propitious. All were charmed. The newspapers everywhere were filled with accounts of the proceedings, Mr. M'Laren being as much the object of admiration as the distinguished personages whom he had entertained. It must be remembered that the time had not then come when the frequent and protracted residences of the monarch of these realms in our Scottish Highlands, and her most condescending confiding intercourse with all classes in her august neighbourhood, have rendered royal visits of the kind I have described of frequent occurrence—so much so as to make any such description as I have given

seem idle and unnecessary. As this and another royal visit of a similar kind paid to Glenartny some years later may have had their influence in determining the purpose of Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort to make choice of the Highlands for temporary residence and retirement from the toils and the turmoil of royal life either at the seat of Government or in its neighbourhood, I may be excused for having adverted to both events.

Our Queen's first visit to Scotland was in 1842. Then Her Majesty and her Royal Consort were guests at Drummond Castle, as Leopold had been. A visit to Glenartny for the Prince, his host, and their suite was proposed, having the same object as on the previous occasion. Mr. M'Laren felt delighted. The Queen was not of the party. The gentlemen guests at the castle only were—the Prince, as was due, being the central figure of the group. Sport was conjoined with scenery-seeing on the occasion. Costly and elegant as the previous entertainment had been, this far exceeded it. The success was complete, and the gratification great.

I have had from our friend's lips the story of both visits. They seemed to have been to him fruitful of much enjoyment. One thing, he used to tell, gave him a small disappointment. Desirous that he might have some memorial of the visit of Prince Albert which he might afterwards show to

his friends, he bethought him of purchasing a costly hair-brush, which should be placed on the toilet table of the bed-room to which the Prince should be introduced previous to the repast of the visitors. His expectation was that the Prince would use the hair-brush, and that thereafter, in Mr. M'Laren's possession, it might be exhibited to friends as a relic possessing so distinguished a history. Our friend travelled to Edinburgh, purchased a very beautiful brush, as he described it, studded all over with cairngorms and other jewels—ornamented, in short, in every way in which such an article could be—to make it worthy of the royal head. Prince Albert used the brush; it attracted his eye by its beauty. The brush became the property of the Prince. Our friend contented himself that he had been able to gratify the royal visitor.

I return from this digression to rote other meetings held by me in pursuance of the object which guided them all. The first was at Alloa, Mr. John Bonar, minister of Larbert, being my companion. Mr. Brotherston was minister of Alloa. He had all his life been of the Evangelical party in our Established Church. In our great conflict of late years he had taken, if not a prominent part, certainly such a part as led us to expect with great confidence that when the crisis came he

would not be found wanting. In this we were disappointed. Whilst some of his family "came out"—to their honour—he stayed "in," separating himself from those with whom he had so long acted, and submitting to the bondage of an Erastianized and dishonoured Church. Our meeting was nevertheless highly successful, the fruit, in course of time, being the formation of a flourishing congregation. The first minister called thereto was Mr. Adam (now Dr. Adam), no mean name in the history of our Free Church, throughout, until the present time.

The second meeting at this time was held at Bridge of Allan, parish of Logie. Of that parish Mr. (now Dr.) Robertson was the pastor. Of him we had cherished expectations, on what all believed were good grounds (he had attended the Convocation), that he would have stood by us to the end. As in Mr. Brotherston's case, we were disappointed. He remained in the changed Church, accepting its new conditions. Both gentlemen for a time exhibited such symptoms of conscious humiliation in the eyes of their neighbours as Bunyan describes PLIABLE did when he forsook Christian and returned to the city on which he had seemed to turn his back; like Pliable, too, after a while they recovered their self-complacency, and became bold in defence of the course chosen by them. Brotherston lived and died at Alloa. Robert-

son was removed to Edinburgh. At Bridge of Allan meeting I was without a companion. We met in a joiner's shed near the river. The assemblage was larger than the house could accommodate, much as in the case of Callander. The result was satisfactory. The occasion was crowned with such success that ere very long a promising congregation was formed—a congregation which soon took the first place in the parish of Logie, a place which it retains, with ever-growing prosperity, till the present time.

Other meetings of similar character, in other places, were held at a somewhat later date, and nearer the 18th of May, which I shall notice. But we were now getting into the thick of the fight, which, in as far as I was myself connected with it, I must first notice.

SECTION IV.

Matters ripening for the great issue—Action on the part of some of the Presbyteries and Synods of the Church—Disruption before the time—Reckless conduct of the minority in the Church—CLAIM OF RIGHTS in the House of Commons—The Right Honourable Fox Maule—Firm and manly course on the part of the Church—Meeting of Synod of Perth and Stirling at Stirling—Mr. Peterkin—Mr. Monilaws—Breaking up of the Synod—Evening assemblage—Mr. Gray of Perth and Mr. Stevenson of Crieff—Scene—Kilmadock and Doune meeting—Parish of Stirling—Suffering connected with North Church—Present condition of Church matters generally—Bruce of Kennet—Correspondence—Making ready for action.

MATTERS ripened fast, making the way of the Church for her separation from the State clear. This was ground of much thankfulness. However for a time we had been tantalized by the silence of Government, that difficulty was ultimately removed, and for those who honestly desired to know what God would have them to do no darkness, as I have already said, was any longer permitted to rest on their path.

The decision by the Court of Session in the Stewarton case was pronounced about the time of which I have been writing. By that decision it was authoritatively determined that the Church did not possess the power of extending her operations to meet the ever-growing neces-

sities of the country, even although she made no demand on the public purse for that end; that she did not possess power of her own action to add to the number of her ordained ministers and her places of worship, though at the people's own cost, giving equality of position to those ministers; that she had no power to bestow on congregations liberty and right to choose their office-bearers for the exercise of discipline and general ecclesiastical government. A presiding influence of another kind must intervene to give the acts of the Church in all such matters validity—an authority to which there must needs be rendered lawful submission. Obedience, in short, to the will of Christ in His Church, expressed in His Word, was not lawful obedience unless it were sanctioned and endorsed by civil legislation. The ministers and congregations (and they were many) which had been formed, and which were fully equipped with their kirk-sessions and other appliances connected with the promotion of Evangelical teaching, were not to be sustained (the law being retrospective as well as prospective) as legally of the Established Church. In its great Church Extension scheme the Church had acted in faith of her inherent right, on the authority of the Word of God—doing nothing contrary to, but all for, the truth and the good of the community, in support also of the best interests of the nation—doing nothing contrary

to what had been known as the law of the land in times past, doing what she did in support and in furtherance of good national government. It mattered not. Without the intervention and sanction of civil authority, nothing the Church had done or might do was to be counted valid!

Some Synods and Presbyteries began to act on the principle of law laid down by the Stewarton decision. The ministers and elders of the congregations referred to could no longer be recognized or received as integral members of those courts. In cases where the decision was not respected, protests were taken by the adverse ministers against the legality of the proceedings. Interdicts began to be served, forbidding the presence of those ministers and elders as members of the courts, at the instance of interested parties outside. The decision in the Stewarton case was appealed to the House of Lords—this it was thought advisable to do, not that the Church admitted the jurisdiction of the civil courts to rule her procedure in such a matter, or that any award in the highest tribunal could determine the duty of the Church, but that it might be ascertained whether such additional interference with the liberty of the Church as the Stewarton decision involved was really to be a condition of our remaining in what had been our past relation to the State. Forbearance on the part of the minority, under such circum-

stances, might have been expected. It was earnestly solicited in their case as well as in the case of the civil courts. A desire to save our great institution from the calamity which was seen to impend, impelled us in this direction. Such a consideration had no influence over those opposed to the Church. Bent on carrying their object, and blind to all consequences, they refused to listen to expostulations addressed to them, and insisted on acting on their views as opposed to those of the courts of the Church, to which by their solemn vows they owed allegiance.

It has sometimes been cast as a reproach on the Church in 1843, that it broke up the Establishment then for sake of the dogma which it had unreasonably adopted and obstinately maintained in face of decisions in the civil courts. Even had it been true that the dogma in question was not the great distinctive principle of the Scottish Church in all ages, and that we were doing nothing more than defending truth essential to the welfare of the Church, as well as truth handed down from the revered confessors of past times, it was not true that *we* broke up the Church in 1843. Before the memorable 18th May of that year the Church was being torn asunder, broken up by those who took action in submission to the civil court decision in the Stewarton case. Even when that case had not been finally disposed of, when it

might have been reversed by the superior court, Presbyteries and Synods were torn into two. The readers of Dr. Norman M'Leod's memoir may see that he was among the first, as he was the boldest and most reckless, if not the most insulting, of the offenders in this direction. With the minority of his Presbytery who adhered to him he withdrew to a separate place of meeting, and there, on the assumption of their being the Presbytery of the bounds, to the exclusion of the majority who remained behind, he with his companions proceeded to act as the legal Presbytery. This occurred in several instances, so that before the 18th of May the Disruption virtually had begun, and such steps were taken as rendered this event in the form which on that day it took inevitable.

To complete the confusion and distress of the time, the debate on our Claim of Right in the House of Commons, with its result, made an end of all expectation of deliverance or redress at the hands of the ruling powers. Whig as well as Tory statesmen pronounced against our claim, and resisted, not allowing the question of law to be even looked at. Lord John Russel, not less than Sir Robert Peel, declared our principle of spiritual independence, as we explained and maintained it, to be inadmissible. In vain was constitutional law asserted to be for us, the Revolution settlement to be for us, the Treaty and Act of Union to be for

us. Our claim, those statesmen declared, was opposed to the principles of English jurisprudence; that was enough. If the Church of Scotland was to retain the advantages of establishment our ecclesiastical functions behoved to be exercised on the assumption that they are derived from, and placed under, the control of what the Church held to be a foreign authority. In plain language, in the Church as established by law, "The things of God must needs be rendered to Cesar."

The motion, ably proposed and enforced by the Hon. Fox Maule, afterwards Earl of Dalhousie—the friend and advocate of his country and his Church in its highest interests, until the close of his long and honoured life—was that the House should go into committee to consider the claim of the Church of Scotland, laid before Government. The debate lasted for two nights. Then the motion was negatived. Only 76 members of the whole House voted in its favour. Of the whole Scotch members a decided majority voted for the motion. More than two to one of the Scotch members who were present at the division did so. And thus the voice of Scotland, uttered on one of the most vital questions that could possibly come up for debate—vital as affecting directly the very highest interests of Church and State—was overborne by the power of the votes of English and Irish members. Nothing, as it was thought, had been more

carefully guarded in the Treaty and Act of Union of the two kingdoms than the position and free action of our Church. When the trial came all that went for nothing. It was, however, felt to be a cause of comfort, when the news reached Scotland, that at least, by this parliamentary action, our way was made clear.

Meanwhile the power of government—inherent, heaven-derived—in the Church was firmly and unflinchingly asserted and carried out, with respect to the cases with which we were required to deal. The cry of rebellion, of resistance to the law of the land, affected us nothing—following in the course of duty. Before that cry we did not quail. We still held our relation to the State, but we could not on that account, divest ourselves of our allegiance to Christ. We continued faithful to Him in this emergency, and we took the consequences—fines, law expenses, threatenings of imprisonment, with reproaches virulent and ceaseless. Our resolution regarding all this had not only been taken, but had been publicly announced. The Government and the country had been officially fully advertised of it. They were made aware that we only waited for the day, as we also longed for it, when, in an orderly way, we might make the separation which was forced on us. Then we expected to be relieved and to occupy a position where we could not be assailed by the

ruthless power before which we were now helpless—a power which seemed bent on making an end, by a process of progressive relentless disintegration, of our existence as a free religious community, holding the principles which we did, whatever might be the sacredness by us attached to them. The expected *day* came, and with it our expected relief. The narrative of the events which distinguished that auspicious occasion must be preceded by other things.

In the month of April the Synod of Perth and Stirling met at Stirling. Mr. Monilaws, minister of Tulliallan, as retiring Moderator, preached the Synod sermon in the East Church. This done, the Court removed into the large Session Hall, which stood between the two Churches (the West and East), on the floor above the large lobby which separated the one place of worship from the other. The general public assembled in large number to witness our procedure, for it was a time of ecclesiastical excitement all over the country, and there were this day rumours afloat that something not usual on such occasions in past times was to happen. It was whispered that Mr. Peterkin had been seen quitting some public conveyance on the morning before the meeting of Synod, and betaking himself to one of the hotels in town. This was ominous, and produced a flutter of anxious foreboding of something that

might come. Mr. Peterkin had, in other cases reported in the newspapers, been the agent of parties opposed to the Church and friendly to the Civil Courts in their hostile action. He was an Edinburgh lawyer, with little, if any, business, we were given to understand, and always willing to be employed—perhaps without much regard to what the nature of the service might be, if competent to him, and if free from risks of legal consequences.

Mr. Peterkin was a tall, gaunt, reddish-haired, slenderly built man, at least six feet high. He must have been sixty years of age, or, it might be, some few years more, when he became a terror to our Church. His appearance was ungainly. His entire frame seemed unnaturally elongated, as if he had by some process been stretched beyond his original longitude of person. His countenance, of a cadaverous hue, partook of this character. His eyes, his nose, his mouth, his chin, were apparently drawn down, and drawn out to an unnatural length. So was his neck, so were all his limbs, arms and legs together. His voice was sepulchral. His countenance seemed incapable of being gathered up into a smile, or of expressing anything but callousness in the last degree. Recently his dress had become greatly improved in look—not now seedy nor *in extremis*, as erewhile. It was studiously bright in its colour

(to save him from the imputation of being clerical); vest and pantaloons especially were so. Out of his pockets on all sides papers of portentous significancy, red-tape bound, protruded. To the eyes of defenceless ecclesiastics each and all of these appeared charged with havoc and ruin. A sight of Mr. Peterkin such as we were told some of our number had had on this day, before our Synod meeting, always produced such an effect as the hawk produces on helpless birds when they see him hovering overhead, with deadly silent quiver in his wings, prepared for the swoop of death, which may any moment fall on them. Our terror of this man may have been unreasonable or childish, but the boldest of us admitted, that, recognizing in him the representative, armed with the power, of all the hostile courts of law, from the lowest to the highest, nay of the Government itself—the Government, from the sheriff-officer to the Queen, his presence when he at any time approached and stood on the floor of any of our courts was very uncomfortable, albeit resolved, as we might be, to disregard and defy him.

Our Moderator had concluded prayer and was in the act of declaring the court constituted, when Mr. Peterkin's figure was seen advancing towards him. He held in his hand what was evidently a law paper. None of us doubted what its true character was. The principal figure had two

other figures, in the next degree to himself our terror, close behind his person, the witnesses to the solemn transaction now to be completed. The paper was read with imperturbed demeanour, perfect quietness, devout aspect, sublime consciousness of importance, amidst stillness, such a calm as might be expected to precede a tempest. It was an interdict by the Court of Session, forbidding our proceeding with the business of the Court, or if we did proceed declaring that our proceedings should be unlawful, should *quoad sacra* ministers be allowed to take their seats as members of the Court. This done, and such further action as laying the document on the table of the Synod being taken, the representative of majesty in this great national transaction with his satellites began majestically to retire, as if nothing could follow but loyal submission. This was the signal for the outburst with us. No one, for an instant, thought of paying respect to the inhibition, by excluding the ministers and elders against whose position in the Court the interdict was directed. No symptom appeared, on any hand, of submission, of yielding our liberty to serve Christ, to civil authority, in a matter so clearly spiritual, not *civil*, as the constitution of our Church courts. The Moderator, with becoming spirit, instantly quitted the chair, cast off the gown, untied and removed his bands, declared that the

Court had been unlawfully interfered with in the discharge of its undoubted constitutional duty, as well as in the fulfilment of its high obligations to our King and Head in heaven. All the members of Court concurred; and, amidst loud murmuring, we broke up. Great confusion prevailed. We were proud of our Moderator; we heartily complimented him on his manliness. But this was the last we saw of Monilaws. He returned to his parish, and by his own account continued firm in his purpose to be with his brethren when the change came. This purpose, unfortunately, he subsequently abandoned. It may have arisen from natural infirmity, or from influence exerted over him from without—the latter, as was at the time surmised, most probably—but so it was that in the hour of trial Monilaws was not with us. Orpah's mind, not Ruth's, possessed him. He went back. He did not share with us the deliverance and blessings which soon came. We heartily mourned over Monilaws, there was so much that was good and acceptable in him. All felt that he ought to have acted differently. The mass of the people of Tulliallan stood true. Soon after the Disruption a meeting there, of which I may have occasion to say something, gathered the adherents to our cause into one, the issue being the formation of a congregation which has ever held a good place among the many congregations of our wide-spread Church.

The incidents in the history of the day of our Synod meeting had not ended with the spirited action of our Moderator, taken without any previous arrangement among us, action which dismissed the Court without adjournment. The Synod had always had an evening meeting—the second diet as required by our laws. No such meeting, of course, could be held on the present occasion. In these circumstances (railway trains did not then with undue haste convey members away) the leading brethren of the Synod resolved that the evening should be devoted to holding a public assemblage with the object of discussing and expounding, to all who might come together, the principles on behalf of which we were maintaining our contention, in prospect of the eventuality we had now in view. Notice was widely given, and at the appointed hour the East Church was well filled. I was called to the chair. Mr. Andrew Gray of Perth was expected to be the chief speaker of the evening. Indeed, principally, because he was of our number, and because he had expressed his willingness to undertake the duty of addressing the people of Stirling on our great question, we had resolved to hold this meeting. His speech was very powerful. It was one of Gray's most successful efforts, and was all the more trenchant for the occurrences of the day. He dwelt on the evils of patronage. He, with great effect,

traced the disorders in our Church to the intolerable yoke which patronage had always, especially in late years, proved itself to be. No one expected that, composed as the platform was intentionally of professed friends, we should have any counter expression of views. In this we were disappointed. One of the brethren who sat with us was Mr. Stevenson, the colleague minister of the parish of Crieff. Friends had throughout calculated on him as being of our number. He was understood to have been guided much in his ecclesiastical views by our venerable father, Dr. Gordon of Edinburgh; and though he had never taken any prominent part in the agitations of the time, which we were willing to ascribe to his comparative youthfulness, we did look for his adherence, notwithstanding some suspicious symptoms which led a few to doubt. This evening, and the proceedings connected therewith, seemed to be chosen to put an end to all questionings as to the course Mr. Stevenson might be expected to follow. He rose to speak after Mr. Gray had concluded. Mr. Gray had been very strong. Mr. Stevenson was not strong in his statement. Very much the opposite was he. He was in favour of many of Mr. Gray's views, but not of *all*. He defended patronage on grounds which he announced to us with great plausibility. He criticized the course of the Non-intrusion party, *regretting* that they had not acted

more wisely. There was much in this strain, which, it may be easily understood, became provoking to those particularly who had taken part in the Non-intrusion conflict as well as those who had intelligently and conscientiously acted with them. Perhaps the felt provocation was all the more that Mr. Stevenson's defection, as we certainly thought it, got expression under the circumstances in which we were met, following on the scene of the forenoon. Mr. Gray lost temper. Friends sympathized with him, and could not but regret it. Matters were made worse by the presence of a hostile party, who, though they might have come with no intention of disturbing our proceedings, were moved to show their hostility by Mr. Stevenson's action. They took part with him, and by unmistakable signs made him and others to know they did so. The meeting became somewhat uproarious. Mr. Gray fulminated. Mr. Stevenson was quiet and meek, to a wonder, in maintaining his ground. It looked very edifying. I did what I could—everything that was competent to me in the circumstances—to soothe honest Mr. Gray. His indignation was strong—boiling over—and my efforts proved of little avail. There was no appearance of dissatisfaction on the part of his unexpected antagonist; Mr. Gray, however, on his part, gave the strongest marks of his. Where the power of argument lay, and what the

general voice of the meeting was, no observer of the scene could doubt. The expression of even a modified dissent on such an occasion was painful. This and more Mr. Stevenson's course had produced.

Reporters were present, not merely reporters of such newspapers as favoured the struggling Church, but of those who were opposed. They gave the discussion, and described all that had occurred connected with the discussion. In one class of papers the story ran not only that Mr. Gray had been encountered by Mr. Stevenson, but that he had been vanquished in the debate —thoroughly and conclusively defeated! Civil patronage had been defended and successfully vindicated! "Who is Mr. Stevenson?" began on all hands to be inquired. It was a name hitherto unknown to fame. So it was not, however, to continue. Worthy or not worthy of distinction, the possessor of the name became famous. At one bound he rose out of his obscurity, and by metropolitan patronage was exalted to a position of chief eminence in the post-disruption Establishment. The town-council of Edinburgh presented him to the church and parish of St. George's. He became the immediate successor of Dr. Candlish, and the more remote successor of Dr. Andrew Thomson. That Mr. Stevenson's views on the question of Church patronage have changed

in course of the years which have passed since the scene in the East Church of Stirling we must conclude. The abolition which he then denounced as what would bring ruin on the Church, if accomplished, he has lived to advocate and to be in some measure instrumental in obtaining, in such form as it has taken, from Government. Change of mind and of action is not criminal when, as in the present case, it is change from error to truth. It was well to become the enemy of Church patronage. But was there nothing required at his and his friends' hands with respect to those who, in advocating the same cause and seeking the same result, were opposed by him, and by those with whom he at the time acted, to their expulsion from the Church? Did the discussion in the East Church, Stirling, ever occur to his mind when he came to occupy ground the same as Mr. Gray that day occupied and he rejected; or did he reflect that something might be due to the memory of his distinguished antagonist, or to the claims of the friends and coadjutors who survive him?

It may, indeed, be safely asserted that the change in the law affecting patronage, effected in some measure by Mr. Stevenson's influence, is nominal rather than real—fictitious and not substantial, delusive as it is intended to delude—and that the advocate of patronage as it was is guilty

of no inconsistency when he appears as the advocate of patronage as now legalized. Should this be accepted as their vindication by those who have led the counsels of the Establishment in procuring the recent nominal change in the law, no one will quarrel with them.

Of the new law of patronage it has been said, with great truth, that it is "a transfer of the rights of the old patrons to a new statutory body, composed of communicants and adherents. The courts of the Church and the congregation are pinned down to the letter of the statute, and election of ministers must proceed to the hour and to the jot and tittle as by law ordained. The new patrons or 'congregation,' composed of the roll of communicants and the unknown constituents called adherents, have no power, as in Dissenting and Free Churches, to nominate whatever eligible probationer or minister they please. They have only power to appoint a committee to look out for candidates, and it is only those who pass this rather fine sieve that may ultimately be voted on. In the event, as must often happen, of a vacancy extending beyond six months by even an hour, the right, such as it is, lapses to the Presbytery. And this is the result which the Kirk now professes to regard as the sum of popular rights and the glory of legislation. And this is the birthright that Christ died to procure for His people, that they

might have the right of being allowed by a British Government to vote along with a promiscuous constituency in the election of a committee to look out for candidates whom it may be safe to choose as their minister." The same authority declares that the favour involved in this legislation, such as it is, in behalf of the Established Church, is granted "for the express purpose of extinguishing another, being assisted from time to time to new legislation with the view of more effectively harassing dissent."

Great institutions ought to have great minds to guide and to govern them. When they have such, ignoble ends will not be served, and make-believe inventions, to delude and deceive the uninformed, will not be employed.

To return to my narrative. On the day that succeeded the meeting of Synod, as has been described, I proceeded, accompanied by Mr. Gray of Perth and Mr. M'Kenzie of Dunblane, to the neighbouring parish of Kilmadock, Doune. The minister there, Mr. Mitchell, was not unfriendly, but he did not cast in his lot with us. He put no obstacle in the way of our dealing with the people of his flock. He appeared among them, heard all we had to state, and made no reply. He was satisfied that such as chose to adopt our views and follow with us should do so. His contentment

was to remain minister of the parish of Kilmadock; ours was to gather into a congregation all within his jurisdiction who were of one mind with us, or who came to be of one mind with us after hearing our statements. Our efforts at Doune in this parish were crowned with great success. The congregation there has from the beginning been, and now is, one of the important congregations of the Free Church.

Here I advert briefly to the condition of matters in my own parish. I have already narrated that my work of agitation began at home. The deputation which visited Stirling, appointed by the Church, was headed by Dr. Robert Buchanan of Glasgow, who, along with his coadjutors, by their addresses, deepened impressions previously made. The result, from all causes which had been in operation, was to make Stirling a striking example of Free Church adherence. All the ministers "came out." The great body of those who had been our flocks followed us. The consequence has been that, in Stirling, the Establishment has never made even such progress as it has in some other of our large towns. What with the strength of the United Presbyterian body, added to ours, we are, perhaps, the most pronounced non-Establishment burgh in Scotland. Though this be true, it did not preserve me from the sorrow arising from the

stern opposition made against me to prevent my congregation retaining possession of the church they had themselves reared. All concessions, and every overture in the way of peaceful solution, consistent with honest dealing on both sides, proved in vain. The managers were 6 to 5, the majority representing those friendly to our struggling Church. The minority had the "law of the land" on their side—law which, as to property (a civil interest), we never thought of disputing—and as they gave the majority of the managers and the congregation (all of whom, to a mere fraction, adhered to the majority) to understand that they were to use their power and eject us if we attempted to continue in possession, nothing was left us but to succumb to circumstances and yield into other hands that which had cost them nothing, and for ourselves to look to the goodness of God for provision when the crisis came. We all felt that unnecessary severity of action, speaking softly, was employed towards us in this case. We had hoped—as already set forth in these pages, repeated now to connect the incidents with what followed—that for the thirty years during which, by their covenant with the town-council, the congregation were to be permitted to have the revenue of the church for liquidating the heavy debt resting on the building, they might have had the privilege of worshipping there. This was refused.

It was shortly after our Synod meeting. If disruption came, minister and people—all who cast in their lot with him—must quit. He, with the other managers, was responsible, personally responsible, for the debt, amounting to between £2000 and £3000. Being a parish church, it could not be attached for the debt. From our own means the money must be paid—the entire body of managers being equally liable. The advantage to the minority was that they had the building for their money. In our united capacity we had, to meet our outlay, the possible revenue from seat-rents; nothing else. On this we calculated little. We anticipated a sparsely occupied church; we saw that we could not enforce payment from those who might choose to become occupiers of seats; all which made the prospect sufficiently dark. Cases of a similar kind, at this era, were common over all Scotland. Perhaps there was none worse, if all details were looked at, than the NORTH CHURCH, Stirling. But the LAW had uttered its voice, and EQUITY was turned to the door.

Some have said it was rash to proceed with such an undertaking as building this North Church in times so threatening and so ominous of evil to the Establishment. When I entered on my efforts for the erection of this structure—which I did at the earnest request of the leading men of Stirling of all parties—no man had thought

of the possibility of the catastrophe to our Sion which so soon came. In 1840 I made the beginning of the effort, similar efforts to which had baffled better men for twenty years before. Then no one dreamed that we were to be tried with the trial which actually overtook us. All believed that our civil rulers would certainly concede claims so legal, so reasonable, so fair, as ours, which would practically have been but continuing the Church in the position she had occupied for untold years before. Thus we were deceived. Everywhere in Scotland places of worship were being built on the Church extension scheme headed by Dr. Chalmers at the time we involved ourselves in the North Church enterprise. Every one of these, by decree of law, fell into the hands of parties who had contributed as little for their erection as the ultimate possessors of the NORTH CHURCH had done for their most comfortable accommodation. The occupiers of all of them (when they came to be occupied) took to themselves coolly, without compunction, the fruit of the labours and outlay of others. Law said that they were safe to do so without fear of consequences, and they did it. For me, I have lived to see God's goodness in not permitting us to retain possession of our Church after the Disruption. I have lived to see, and gratefully to acknowledge before Him, that what the parties

opposed intended for evil He turned to good, fulfilling in this, as in many other things, very manifestly at this era in the history of our Church, His great promises made to those who willingly suffer in His cause and for the glory of His name.

The clouds, at the era of which I am writing, had come down heavily on our prospects. All looked dark in the direction of the high places of the land. For a time we had cherished hope—as already stated—that the Government, yielding to influences which, from various quarters, were brought to bear on them, would, though it were at the last moment, by some competent concession preserve our long-honoured institution from being driven from the high position as a national institution which belonged to it. At one time in the history of our case it would not have required much on the part of those in power to have secured this. As matters went on the decisions by the Courts of Law made this less and less hopeful, until it seemed at last, because of those decisions and the use made of them, to become impossible.

During the time of the negotiations I had opportunity of knowing the progress of events through other channels besides the published intimations intended for the Church and the country at large. Bruce of Kennet, one of my

heritors, and for many years in succession the representative elder from the Presbytery of Stirling in the General Assembly, I had the honour and happiness to reckon among my personal friends. He was a member of the Assembly's Non-intrusion Committee, possessing great influence there, his counsels being greatly valued. Many deputations, as circumstances demanded, were, time after time, sent to London to deal with the Government. Bruce of Kennet, I believe, in every instance had a place in these deputations. He was in politics of the party then in power. He was intimate personally both with Sir Robert Peel and Sir James Graham. Much, therefore, was he valued in the prosecution of the work of negotiation. For, earnest, too earnest, as he was in his political convictions, equally earnest, perhaps more earnest, and devoted in a better cause he was—the cause of the principles of truth for which our Church had now come into such peril through the gratuitous assaults made on our action when serving the Master in Heaven. Mr. Bruce knew all from the beginning. He did not come into the discussion by any side movement on his part. Throughout he had taken his place in all the proceedings of our Church courts sympathizing and suffering with us. He did not decline, rather he offered himself, to be exposed to the threatenings of the Court of Session by going into the district of

Strathbogie to act as an elder in the dispensation of the Communion in one of the parishes there in face of an interdict. There was not a bolder or more determined or more fearless friend among the eminent laymen connected with our Church at this great era. From him I had frequent communications from London pending the progress of the negotiations. Some extracts (the letters were only partially at the time and are not now private) will illustrate the nature of the efforts which were made with those in high places to procure a settlement, on becoming terms, of our troubles. On the eve of his going on one of the deputations Mr. Bruce wrote to me from Kennet:—

"I think you will like to peruse the inclosed, which I received from London. Any news from head-quarters are pleasant at the present moment, and anything which gives a ray of hope is eagerly embraced. Be so good as return me Mr. Hamilton's (Mr. John Hamilton, advocate) letter. You may show it to any *known friend*, such as Mr. M'Micking (of Meltonise), but please send it by to-morrow's post. I am scrolling a letter to Sir Robert Peel to-day, and try to do all I can. I am grateful at the Presbytery returning me, and hope the next Assembly may be the means of restoring some kind of harmony." I sent this note, which inclosed an interesting and hopeful communication from Mr. Hamilton to Mr. Bruce

from London, to Mr. M'Micking. In sending it back to me Mr. M'Micking wrote: "I return Mr. Hamilton's letter to Kennet with thanks. The dawn seems to be near. Sir George, you know, has more influence over the mind of the great Duke than any other man living, and also great weight with Sir Robert. I have no doubt Mr. Bruce will write a good letter to Sir Robert, and it will always be giving him a *jog* the right way, even if it should be of no other use; but I remember seeing Sir Robert and Kennet together, and they seemed to be on the footing of personal intimacy, and I saw evidently on the part of Sir Robert a desire to attend more to Kennet than any other of the party, and there were several more influential men present, politically speaking."

When Mr. Bruce went to London I received several letters. In one he says:—"I send you a copy of the memorials we have presented to Government. I have written to Mr. M'Micking, and beg to refer you to my letter to him *for news*, which will save me writing two letters to the same tune. I am just going in search of the Lord Advocate. I hear there is a change in his opinions, and I intend to devote this week here among some of the *subordinates*. If you have time to peruse the memorial on Wednesday evening, perhaps you will send me a line by Thursday's post, addressed

to 10 Dover Street, Piccadilly." Later he says, "I desired Mr. M'Micking to communicate to you what was going on, and matters are continuing favourable, that is, our case is under consideration of those who have the power of doing good. When I say favourable, we shall get a measure 'which we can act under,' and to which we 'can shape our ecclesiastical procedure'—this is all as yet I have been able to ascertain, and which I expect we shall ultimately receive. It will enable us to carry out our principles though not in the best mode. I was favoured yesterday with a long interview with Sir James Graham, when I had a communication to take from friends in Edinburgh. I urged strongly a consideration of a fuller measure. The Cabinet met to-day, and I am to see him on Friday. I am in hopes good has been done, and it is curious to know the Moderates have been calculating on support from Government, in which they have no ground. In your letter you seem to think Sir Robert Peel would strengthen his Government by giving the Church a full measure. I think so too, and after I heard all Sir James Graham had to say, at my first interview, I hinted this. His answer was worthy of a British statesman and a Christian man. He said, 'That is not unimportant in itself, but I assure you my object in seeing you and endeavouring to accommodate matters with your friends, proceeds from a sincere

wish to end agitation on a question originating in a desire on the part of the people of Scotland to secure evangelical pastors and evangelical preaching in their parishes. Their desire has been very laudable, and I am anxious to act towards them fairly, &c. &c.' I shall be able to tell you more when I have the pleasure of seeing you. In the meantime I cannot leave London as long as Sir James thinks I can be of use, and until he tells me of the decision of the Cabinet. I regret the other members were so hurried away, though perhaps the private negotiation may answer the end. Yesterday I waylaid Dr. M'Farlane of Greenock on his way through town from Ipswich; he remains a few days. I have an able friend in Mr. Hamilton, and Sir George Sinclair arrived yesterday with powers from the Non-intrusion Committee, but I have not yet seen him." In a later communication from London he says:—"Our mission here has been long protracted by the communications I was authorized to make, but now I am free to return to Scotland; Mrs. Bruce and I set out to-morrow. I really think matters look well. The Committee in Edinburgh have not refused the offer Sir James Graham desired me to make, but as it was the *minimum* which the Church could accept as recognizing our principles, the Committee requested the negotiation should be open in the hope of Government reconsidering

their proposal. Thus it stands; the negotiation remaining with the good *understanding* of both parties. I rejoice to think the Government have now recognized our principles, and even Lord Aberdeen has agreed to entertain them. Mr. Candlish and Mr. Hamilton have drawn up a memorandum for Sir James Graham of the Church's wishes. He is now in possession of this, with a private letter from myself. I mention this to *you*, though in our report we intend to intimate reception until matters are more matured. I have been in some anxiety for some days, for I felt I was delicately situated; but I own I leave London with a light heart, that the *proposal* remains, and a good *understanding* exists. We owe much to Mr. Candlish, who left Edinburgh on Tuesday, returned there, leaving London on Friday, to preach yesterday in St. George's. I shall tell you more when we meet. I have felt an inclination to give you this *private information*, which need not go further than to Mr. M'Micking. I have seen few men like Sir James Graham; he really has his heart in it." Later, in another note, Mr. Bruce says, "I have a private letter this afternoon from Sir James Graham, thanking me for the trouble I have been at with him. He has taken well the memorandums sent, which were drawn by Dr. M'Farlane and Mr. Candlish. Matters are in a very favourable train, I may say

they never looked so well, that is, the recognition of our principles, though not *yet* to the extent I hope the settlement may arrive at. Sir James knew I was to set off to-morrow, so he wrote to me his anxious hope nothing would occur during the recess to retard a settlement. I had some conversation regarding Elgin, which will be the first appointment he will be called on to make. His sentiments are fair, and upright, and honourable. I hope no adverse interest may be brought to bear on him. Mr. Cumming Bruce is the member for Elginshire—his opinions are adverse to ours, but I do not think he will have influence enough to make Sir James swerve from good intentions. I am glad to find that the English people are more alive to our Church question. They are taking a deep interest in it. I hope to reach Kennet by Saturday, &c. &c."

After coming home he writes from Edinburgh:—"I have had rather a satisfactory interview with the Solicitor-general. He quite homologates my opinion as to the extent of the *Liberum Arbitrium*, and it is evident he is in communication with the Home Office." And again, writing from Kennet, he says:—"Had it not been for a meeting of the Non-intrusion Committee on Tuesday, it was my intention to have been in Stirling, but I found it of some importance my being there. The report of the London deputation was given in that day,

and it required a supplementary report from those that remained after the deputation had broken up, and the communication with which I was charged. Matters look satisfactory, and I hope a good spirit will prevail, and all will see the necessity of some settlement on the principle for which the majority of the Church contends."

It was at a date subsequent to the time these letters were written that our ecclesiastical atmosphere became overcast, and the gathering clouds indicated destructive tempest. Had forbearance been shown by our pursuers—had the courts allowed leisure for completing what had been so far happily begun—leisure for completing arrangements in the spirit and in the line indicated by Mr. Bruce's letters, such a settlement might have been arrived at as would have secured the integrity of the Establishment for a few years more. But the gauge of the *Liberum Arbitrium* was so extremely narrow, the risks of running off the rails were so many, and the probabilities that we should so great, that, whatever the intense feeling in favour of preserving our Church entire prevailing at the time, we may now say boldly it was of God that the negotiations on that limited plan, through the severe action of parties opposed, utterly failed and came to nought. No doubt behind what seemed to us at the time "a frowning providence God hid a smiling face." We were led, as blind, by a way

that we knew not—led a "right way," "through fire and through water, into a wealthy place." Faith was needed, faith was given, and faith did its proper work. In our emergency faith was no dead principle. It partook neither of fanaticism nor of a false trust in what men call *fate*. Every means was employed in prospect of what we began to be assured must come—what, both among the hostile Church leaders and the Government advisers, was resolved should come—the complete suppression of the Evangelical and Non-intrusion party or their expulsion from the Establishment. What Mr. Bruce and other similar friends of the Government feared might happen did come. Sir James Graham, Sir Robert Peel, and Lord Aberdeen fell under the influence of counsellors of a very different character from the friends—their friends—to whom I have referred. That they were misled, deceived, and betrayed into a political blunder (so to speak of it) such as no statesmen in modern times in this country have been guilty of, they were soon made to see, as they were candid enough to acknowledge, but only when their error could not be put right.

The Church met the crisis manfully, trusting in the righteous Lord, assured that the cause was His. In every locality strenuous exertion was used. For example, in Stirling we had a vigorous Non-intrusion Committee holding meetings, printing

tracts, dispersing them with the names of the writers (all local) attached. We had also a Sustentation Association organized. One of the town newspapers, the result of influence employed by us, became favourable to our principles. Its columns were largely occupied with our discussions of these, rendered all the more pungent from the opposition of the rival newspaper, which did its best to repudiate our principles and to cast discredit on those who maintained them. From that time till this the *Observer* has been true to our cause, as far as competent to it and as opportunity arose, its opponent being placed very much in the position of Giant Pope at his cave's mouth relatively to Bunyan's *Christian* passing on his way to his desired rest.

SECTION V.

Review of the condition of the Church—The two parties in the minority, the deserters from previous position, and those who never professed to hold the right principle—To Edinburgh on 16th May—State of feeling there—Drawing up of the PROTEST—Preparations in view of the expected Disruption—John Jeffrey—The day before the Disruption—Doubts and fears—THE 18TH MAY—William III.'s portrait—Beginning of the day with me—St. Giles—Dr. Welsh there—Assembling of members—Arrival of Lord-commissioner—The Sermon—To St. Andrew's Church—Beginning of proceedings there—Reading of Protest—Departure of Moderator and followers—THE DISRUPTION—Scene in the House afterwards—Lord-advocate M'Neil and others—My exit—Bruce of Kennet—Procession—Lord Jeffrey—Lord-advocate—Arrival at Tanfield—Lord-Provost Forrest—Sheriff Speirs—Appearance of interior of Hall—My reception—Mrs. Burd—Opening of the Assemby—Dr. Welsh—Dr. Chalmers—The two Moderators—Dr. Buchanan—A Disruption dinner.

THE conflict of the Church of Scotland with the world, in the region of human law and human legislation, was now about to have its solution. Her way seemed to have been made perfectly clear. Decisions in courts of law, which courts, by the constitution of the country and the Treaty of Union with England, were debarred from interference in the things in which they had overborne us, had now, so far as such decisions could, made an end of our testimony for truth and of our

Church action in accordance with the truth of our testimony. Government and the legislature had hòmologated, or declared definitively their intention to homologate, these decisions. All effort, pursued to the utmost limit, to preserve our noble institution, so great a blessing in the land—never greater, never, perhaps, so great, as when the assault which had the present sad termination began—all effort proved unavailing. If we retained our relation to the State with such advantages as that relation was supposed to involve, it must be on condition that we should abandon our convictions of God's revealed will touching the government of the Church—convictions throughout maintained by us—convictions referring to what we believed to be essential to her right action, nay, even to her very existence as a divine ordinance. In case we resolved on that course, we might retain our position as an Establishment subject to law as now settled by the decisions on record and the new legislation in accordance with these. We had no redress, whatever the injustice towards us involved in the change that had come. There was no thought and no word of "life interests" then, though we had come into the Church with the conviction, and had acted on it, that her relation to the State was one leaving her perfectly free to expound for herself the mind of God and to do His will as expressed in His Word—no thought

and no word of "life interests"—nothing proposed to us but the yoke of bondage on the one hand, or expulsion and destitution on the other! Had we been enemies of our country—traitors to her interests—no harsher measure could have been dealt to us. There was neither redress nor compassion. The alternatives were SUBMISSION—absolute submission, or SEPARATION—separation from the State, separation from our homes, from our places of worship, from our means of subsistence, and, had it been possible (as in some instances was attempted), from our flocks. No survivors of those who passed the ordeal, though all be forgiven, will deny that the cruelty as well as injustice were deeply felt. In the midst of great services rendered to the cause of the Gospel, such persecution as could be perpetrated in a civilized country in the nineteenth century was inflicted on the Church of Scotland at the era of which I write. Had the Church, for all this, hesitated, men would rightly have cried SHAME, and religion would have received a terrible wound. But hesitation was impossible. That portion of the Church who had, in all the time of the conflict, accepted and endorsed the *Erastianism* of the civil courts, seemed to themselves consistent when they continued as they had been—consistent because they homologated the deeds of their fathers in the worst and most wicked time of the Church's history. But they might

have reflected that they were not consistent with what the Church had been when represented by those who, true to her great principle, suffered unto blood for what *they* repudiated. There were others who submitted—thank God they were not many—and made shipwreck of their previous profession and solemn protestations.

It was comfortable to all who were enabled by grace to abide faithful, that the path of duty was made clear. Not more clear was the way of Israel in their great exodus made to them by the pillar of cloud which went before them in their journey than was ours, by many infallible tokens which we could not fail to see and to understand unless we willingly closed our eyes. Such, at the time, was our happy reflection, and such the blessed assurance by which we encouraged each other, as we contemplated our position, day after day, and foresaw what was at hand. We had joy—"joy in the Lord." We were living in a time of *revival*—not of, so-called, revival *meetings*. Not much, if anything, was said of it. The thing itself was with us richly. Our prayer-meetings, held everywhere all over the country—prayer-meetings singularly blessed by earnestness, sincerity, continuity, concord, gave evidence of God's presence in an unusual measure. We seemed to be simultaneously made both to sow in tears and to reap in joy.

It cannot be matter of surprise that those of the faithless who have remained till later days, perhaps to satisfy conscience, should, with others who have cast in their lot with them, desire, when opportunity offered, to accomplish some change in the direction of our contendings by a *quasi* abolition of the Law of Patronage; that they should, through facile and uninformed Lord Advocates, seek to accomplish this; and still further, by them should aim at obtaining a legislative declaration in behalf of their Church of a *quasi* spiritual independence. Delusion and mockery though both in their circumstances must be, the desire and the effort in question constitute, although by no confession of theirs, an undoubted testimony to their convictions of the virtue and the value of our contention, a contention in which they forsook us. No change in the Law of Patronage such as has crowned their labour, and no legislative declaration of spiritual independence such as they are said now to desiderate, can avail to alter their position as a State Church, or the conditions which now form the terms of union. A slave in chains may speak and may boast of liberty; so may the present Establishment. But deny they cannot, all those changes notwithstanding, that they admit the authority of civil government in spiritual things —that they render unto Cesar the things that

are God's, that they have sold their country's birthright!

On the 16th of May I proceeded to Edinburgh to take my part in the consultations which were to be held by the brethren in prospect of the expected Disruption. Much solemnity of feeling prevailed. We felt the sacredness of the duty we contemplated and the vast responsibility it involved. Some were not without hope that, even at the eleventh hour—perhaps in the speech to be delivered by the Lord Commissioner at the opening of the Assembly, perhaps in the Queen's letter—concessions might be made which would prevent the change in our outward condition which we saw approaching. Those who cherished such expectations could not believe that the Government could be so infatuated as to precipitate a calamity so great as the breaking up of the Scottish Establishment. Others were filled with fears—they were the wise and the most resolute among us—that some delusive overtures or specious proposals might be presented to us, which would have the effect of satisfying the less steady and determined, and so of causing a breach more or less calamitous in our ranks. But we were mercifully spared such suffering as would have followed from this. The people in power were sure that they had triumphed by their firmness, coupled with their adroit manage-

ment, and that no effect would follow all the agitation of the years which had been occupied in the controversy but the removal from the Establishment of some restless and dissatisfied spirits whose presence there was the cause of all the troubles. The Government was assured, we knew on good authority, by their representatives and officials in Scotland that not more than *thirty* would *secede*—so they put it. A Principal in the west—much blamed for the delusive views which prevailed at head-quarters—on being appealed to for his opinion of this surmise, sanctimoniously declared that he would be thankful he could think so well of the party as to believe that even that number of them would stand true to the noisy professions they had been making;—for the sake of religion he earnestly trusted it might be so! This gentleman could not but have known that he was deceiving those who looked to him for information. It is not possible to conceive—unless he willingly blinded himself—that he could believe that *thirty* of such men as he knew us to be, would constitute the sum of the *secession*—that *that* would be the measure of the calamity about to befall the Establishment. The Principal was a fair representative of the *Moderate* party generally at this crisis; men, all of them, who scrupled at nothing in urging the Government to keep to their purpose to disallow our claims, to extinguish

our pretensions, to restore and permanently consolidate principles and practices which in past times had been destructive, by all experience, of spiritual progress and prosperity in the land, but of which they thought differently.

The fruit of our solemn consultations, conjoined with much earnest prayer, was the famous PROTEST laid on the table of the Assembly on the day of our separation—a protest which has never been answered, and never will—in which we declared to the Government and the nation that the General Assembly about to convene could not be, and was not, a General Assembly of the constitutional Church of Scotland, on the ground of the many weighty reasons which the Protest embodied, embracing as it did the whole history of the procedure of law courts and of the Government in resisting our constitutional and lawful claims, in refusing even to consider them, and in crushing our liberties as a Church, in violation of all national faith, as well as in violation of the crown rights of our glorious Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. This document was signed on the day before the Disruption by *four hundred* ministers, among whom perfect unanimity seemed to every observer to prevail.

All preparations, meanwhile, had been made for our going forward, in the event of the expected Disruption, with the business of the Church in

separation from the State—all preparations for holding a *lawful* Assembly, wanting the presence of the Queen's commissioner, in an orderly and scriptural form, with scrupulous regard to the rules laid down in our symbolic books. A large hall, capable of containing 3000 persons, was prepared —Tanfield or Canonmills—a building now memorable in ecclesiastical history, especially the ecclesiastical history of Scotland—was leased for our purposes. Quietly had the operation of fitting this large place for our anticipated necessities gone on. The leaders in Edinburgh were cognisant of the work of preparation; few of the country brethren were, and generally it may be said, that when the Assembly flowed into the spacious apartment everybody was taken by surprise, whilst all felt that in this, as in other things connected with our great movement, the Lord's hand was on us for good. The great picture by Hill which now graces the Free Presbytery Hall in Edinburgh, whatever its anachronisms and defects in some respects, represents with great truth the character and appearance of Tanfield Hall. Most comfortable was the seating and all other provisions which the anticipated occasion was expected to require. Low-roofed and of vast dimensions, it threatened to be, in point of ventilation and acoustics, not what we should require. The event proved that in both these respects, and indeed in all respects, the hall

was everything that could be wished. The presiding genius in these preliminary preparations on which so much, not of the convenience merely of the Assembly, but its efficiency as a power over the public mind depended, was JOHN JEFFREY. Mr. Jeffrey was at the time a probationer of some standing of our Church. Of no great distinction as a preacher, and of no eminent promise as a prospective minister, he nevertheless was possessed of a wonderful natural talent for such constructive work as we at this crisis needed. He proved the Bezaleel of the Disruption. His services were truly valuable. Everything that the comfort of the multitude who might be looked for when the day came required, every accommodation for officials of every name, for the leaders, for the ordinary body of members, clerical and lay, had been provided to the full. Nothing was left for the hour of excitement and agitating transition when it arrived—nothing that could occasion confusion, disorder, difficulty, annoyance, or trouble of any sort. All hearts were filled with admiration and thankfulness, Mr. Jeffrey receiving his due meed of praise. If we were to be driven furth of the place where our great annual Assembly had for ages been wont to gather—if we were to be driven into the wilderness—a tabernacle was provided for us there; noiselessly and effectively it had been reared, God so demonstrating to us wondering

how He cares for those who love His name, who care for His glory, and who suffer for His sake.

The 17th was a day of much excitement and of some anxiety with us all. Rumours of many kinds were in the air. Defections and desertions, many and most calamitous (had they occurred), were boldly predicted, in some instances were said, falsely, to have taken place. It was certain that various means had, surreptitiously and with pressing assiduity, been employed with supposed doubtful men—such prospects had been opened up to them, such promises had been made, if they agreed to forsake the ranks of the "troublers of Israel"—that every hope was cherished by the attempted seducers that the array which our PROTEST seemed to describe would be broken, and that our Free Church would be reduced to a contemptible abortion. In all this there was no more than we had had large experience of, at least in all the latter part of our struggle. Boldly was it averred that no intention existed with us to make a disruption; that our only object was to tell upon the Government, and to concuss them into granting our unreasonable claims. Added to this, there were bold assertions made as to individuals of our number, who were named, with the assurance that the assertions were true. All this had been rife for months. A day or two before I came to Edinburgh to take my part in the matter of the PRO-

TEST a gentleman accosted my oldest son, then a boy of about fifteen, "So your father is not to come out after all. I have been assured of this a few minutes ago." "Indeed," was the reply, "if it be so, I have heard nothing of it. I love my father as well as child can love a parent, and rather than that he should so act I could see his head laid on the block." Many had similar experience. As the 18th approached such rumours were multiplied and intensified. No one can wonder that such a state of things had its effect. For myself I felt sick at heart. The reflection with us all was, Can such things be true, even in a measure? We knew that, human nature being what it is, defections under inducements of the kind employed might possibly occur, and if to any extent, it might be to a great extent. Each faithful man knew his own heart, the resolve God had given to him, the purpose which he determinedly meant to execute; but no man could judge his brother or see into his brother's heart. I did not give credit to the rumours. I rejected them whenever reported to me. But I can remember when, on the 17th, the question was pointedly put to me by a friend, how many I *really* expected to come out next day, my answer was that, taking into account all that had been done and all that was still being done to break us, I should be truly thankful if, on the first day, *two hundred* ministers were to separate; more

(the full number pledged) I expected would in time follow. We were all tested in our faith. It required that we should be so, and that we should be fully persuaded, "every man" for himself, fully persuaded "in his own mind." What God had prepared for us was not yet seen. The cloud rested on the future. Had it not been so, there would have been small trial of faith. Had the "three children" foreseen their triumph in the furnace seven times heated, so prepared for them before their eyes, no trial of faith could have been known in their case. The cloud was on the future to them. So by their TRUST they gave glory to the God of heaven. Words expressed their faith. Refusal to commit sin, under terror of torment, proved it. And God was faithful.

We were not in terror of stake or scaffold, as our fathers had been for the same cause that we now sought to uphold. Nevertheless it was no small matter to be dispossessed of our past means of temporal support, of our incomes, our manses, our position in society. It was no small matter to leave ourselves in the hands of those who, none being under pledge, might be pleased to adhere to us;—their number, their character, their influence, their ability, their willingness to supply our need, being as yet untried and unknown. Not the three children and Daniel, in their exaltation, affluence, influence, are the examples of faithful men loving God; but

the first, bound and prepared for the furnace, and the other in the hands of the officers of justice at the mouth of the lions' den, are so. Not the ministers of the Free Church of Scotland abiding by the principles of their Church, in the time following 1843, with new churches, new manses, a well provided exchequer, public favour everywhere though not from those in high places, applause on all hands, not these; but those same ministers as they appeared on the days immediately preceding 18th May, 1843, with the uncertainties and anxieties and deep shadows of that season upon them holding fast their profession and purpose, and going forward with firm step to meet what God might appoint to them, furnish illustration of faith and faithfulness, which gave glory to God. Grace was bestowed for that end, and grace triumphed. To the world a fresh proof was afforded, as had often been done in the history of the Church of Christ previously, that God can give to those who serve Him faith to sustain under testing experience, faith to work, strength to endure, hope to believe against hope, causing them to honour Him whose they are. Of faith, the gift of God, our faithfulness at this time was. Never can we cease to give all the praise to whom it is due.

The eventful day at length arrived. An unusual excitement seemed to prevail in the city

everywhere. Many had come from the country. The wives and daughters of the ministers, as a rule, were in town, ready to share with their husbands and their fathers the lot falling to them, be it what it might. The Commissioner held his levee as usual, at Holyrood Palace. It was largely attended. The Marquis of Bute was personally popular. The Government could not have made choice, for the high office which he filled on this occasion, of a nobleman more calculated to conciliate men's minds, or had it been practicable, to be the successful advocate of temperate measures and a temperate course of action. There might, from the Marquis's known character, and from the ignorance in which all men were left of the ultimate decision of the Government, have been some lingering rays of hope that the gloom which rested on the country and Church should be dispersed. The levee, consequently, was well attended. I did not go there myself; and therefore I did not witness the event that occurred when the crowd was at its best, the portrait of William III. falling from its frame on the wall of the reception room on to the floor, strongly attracting the attention of the Commissioner and the gorgeous throng by which he was surrounded; nor did I hear the shout uttered, no one could tell by whom, and which resounded through the hall, "There goes the Revolution Settlement." That attention was drawn to an

incident of such little moment, that the incident produced the reported exclamation, and that when it occurred such pains should have been taken both to spread the story and to cast discredit on it, show at least that excitement greatly prevailed. The history of the day might well be expected to have a place in the annals of the country.

I chose for myself to be entirely alone during the forenoon. I had been for twenty years and more, then, a minister of the Establishment. Though I knew that the *Establishment* was not the *Church* of Scotland, yet it was an impressive thought that, by the course adopted on the part of our Civil authorities, the Church was about to be compelled to make an end of the relation to these authorities implied in Establishment—compelled to testify against the nation, as represented by them; compelled to protest that what they were about to consummate was to the dishonour of God's Son, who is at once the King of Sion and the King of nations.

I went early to the High Church, where the sermon at the opening of the Assembly was to be preached. The building, in the interior, had not undergone the change, so greatly curtailing the amount of accommodation, adopted of recent years. The gallery running all round—the royal pew being directly in front of the pulpit—was then there, prepared with the area below to receive the audience

soon to enter. The preacher, Moderator of the previous Assembly, was to be Dr. David Welsh, professor of Church History in the University of Edinburgh—a name immortalized by the part enacted on this day by him who bore it. I took my place in the gallery, on the left hand of the pulpit, in the second pew from the front, close to the wall, thus having the side face of the occupant of the pulpit in my view, and the front faces of the great body of the audience, especially of the Lord-commissioner and his numerous brilliant *suite*. It was no unusual thing for the officiating minister on such occasions to be kept waiting—long beyond the hour appointed for public worship, abiding the arrival of the representative of majesty, until whose arrival no commencement of the service could be made. The numbers attending the levee determined the duration of the time of suspense. When the levee at any time was not largely attended the pause was short, when largely attended it was long. It was short or long according to the attendance at Holyrood. On the present occasion Dr. Welsh was at least an hour sitting in his place, the bell of St. Giles all the time pealing its best. The audience were for the most part outside the building, waiting the approach of the Commissioner with the gorgeous barbaric parade of soldiers, officials of every name and colour, bands of music, with the many appliances which make Commis-

sioner of Assembly's day in Edinburgh not unlike Lord-mayor's day in London—equally pompous, equally foolish, equally antiquated, equally a pageant deserving to be cast to the moles and to the bats.

In the long interval I occupied myself in marking the expression of countenance of parties as they entered and paced up the aisles or along the galleries of the antique fabric. Of the *Moderate* party very few came to attend the service or to hear the sermon, so I had little opportunity to study their faces. At the close of the levee, without attending public worship, they had made their way to St. Andrew's Church, George's Street, where the Assembly was to hold its sittings.

The faces of the leaders in the ecclesiastical movement which was this day to culminate were grave as they walked sedately into the church, along its passages, as they took their places, and looked round on the ancient pile that was for the last time to receive them as ministers and elders of the Establishment. The faces were grave, but the men wore no appearance of being sad or downcast; rather did they appear calm, satisfied, reliant, hopeful, fully realizing their position. Wearied, one might say of them, with agitation and controversy, and now bracing themselves for action, they spoke very little to each other—patiently awaiting the events of the day. Dr. Welsh

appeared self-possessed and resolute, pale somewhat, with a shade of anxiety on his face. During the long interval he employed himself in turning over and examining the MS. of his discourse, rolling his tongue about in his mouth, according to his usual habit, as if he were chewing it. His head and face were indicative of resolution—resolution with an element of sternness. One could not have desired a finer head or a finer general contour of countenance to represent the fixed purpose and intelligent resolution required in a man who, knowing the gravity of his position—the magnitude and importance of the issues which might follow the step in taking which he was that day to be the leader—was prepared to go through with it. From my position in the gallery of the church I looked direct down into the pulpit, and marked the good and noble man's every motion.

The representative of majesty at length entered, accompanied by the gay and gaudy throng which usually dignifies the procession on the day of the opening of the General Assembly. This day everything was gay and gaudy beyond all I had ever witnessed on such occasions. The dreary bell ceased to toll; the martial music and trumpets ceased to roar and blare. On His Grace appearing in the royal pew, the congregation rose to their feet in a body to receive him. The minister, standing up in the pulpit, bowed to the occupant

of the royal pew, and then bowed to the house on both sides. The services proceeded in accordance with the usual form in our National Church. Dr. Welsh put no strain on his voice. His friends knew that he was labouring under disease of the heart, of which he died a very few years after, and they had warned him against making any great effort. The text (Rom. xiv. 5) was pronounced with marked emphasis. Usually, because of a natural slight hesitancy, every word in his sentences was made to stand distinctly by itself, by which practice the precipitancy and indistinctness in enunciation, usual in all cases where such a natural defect exists, were effectually prevented. His text this day was made very effective by this mode of utterance:—

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

Each word apart admitted of being emphasized. Each word accordingly, by the preacher's reading, was made emphatic. All felt the power. The sermon is well known. Because of the lowness of voice used in the delivery most hearers on this august occasion must have been indebted to their reading of it afterwards for their knowledge of its character and excellence.

As soon as the discourse and service were concluded the congregation began to break up. Few remained until the concluding benediction was

pronounced. The anxiety to get away to St Andrew's Church, George's Street, where the Assembly was to be constituted, if that event were to take place, explained the unseemly haste to escape from the church shown by many. Under the circumstances it was excusable, yet one regretted it.

I remained till the close. Then I took my departure, with all the speed I could employ, for the great rendezvous. I was in my place there before either the Moderator or the Commissioner appeared in their respective places. They had travelled by state conveyances, which involved more or less delay. I had come on foot.

I entered by the door on the east side of the church. I might have shown face in the interior a few minutes earlier than I did; but, fancying that to be near the door would secure taking place in the earliest departures for Tanfield, I purposely made myself late of entering. In this I ignorantly committed a mistake, and discovered, when it was too late to be remedied, that the departure was to be from the front pews, those nearest the Commissioner's throne going first, and so back towards the wall, causing occupants of pews near the doors to be later in their egress than the others. By this I felt for a moment chagrined. Had the purposed arrangement been previously intimated, some few of us would have

made appearance on the Tanfield platform and in the Hall sooner than we were permitted to do.

When I took my seat (the Commissioner and Moderator not having yet arrived from the High Church) the *Moderate* side of the house, to the right of the throne and Moderator's chair, was crowded. The cross seats, directly opposite the throne, were crowded too. Our side of the house, left side of the throne, was not full. The *Moderates* had not been at Church; we all had. Little time elapsed, however, when the contrast in this respect disappeared. Our friends, as they arrived from the opening services in St. Giles in large numbers, speedily caused the left side to be as densely crowded as the other. The lower part of the building had been entirely reserved for the members of Assembly. The galleries were open to the community generally—to as many as could find admittance—and to all ministers and elders not members, as well. They presented, all round, from the front seats close up to the wall, a mass of living beings, standing as well as sitting, ladies and gentlemen of all ranks. It was an exciting and animating sight. A lively enthusiasm seemed to have possession of the vast concourse. For the shortest possible time it seemed doubtful on whose behalf—on behalf of which side of the throne—this was cherished. Were our *Moderate* brethren to the right, the friends of the law of the

land and the foes of the struggling majority, to enjoy the homage, approbation, and applause of the congregated throng? Or were those who now, after fighting the battle of liberty in the Church —the battle which had often before been fought in Scotland,—lay at the mercy of civil authority, authority wearing the *sword* as its weapon both of argument and vindication—were they to be rewarded with the popular verdict expressed by public applause in this centre where the heart of Scotland might be held for the time to beat? Such doubt on this question as might for a moment have existed was soon dispelled. As the known leaders of the Liberal Evangelical section—the overborne majority of the Assembly—entered St. Andrews and took their places, the expression of feeling was unmistakable. Their reception was of the most enthusiastic character. It could not occasionally be suppressed. The interval before the appearance of the high functionaries—Commissioner and Moderator—afforded opportunity for this display, perhaps more opportunity than could have been desired. There was nothing obstreperous or vulgar in the expression of opinion in the present form on this occasion. Persons of the character to enact such expression were not there. Every element of the *rough* was absent. Deep, solemn, pronounced, and overawing the prevailing expression was. I have witnessed on

many occasions popular declarations of approbation and sympathy, but never anything like what I witnessed in the church of St. Andrews on the 18th May, 1843.

Dr. Welsh first came in from behind the throne in the full costume of the Moderator. He was received with the usual formalities, very carefully awarded. He bowed to each side of the house as all stood, having risen simultaneously when he entered the house. This done, he placed, rather cast down, his three-cornered hat on the table before him, and assumed the chair. At this moment he looked even more resolute than he had done in the pulpit of St. Giles; though evidently conscious of the onerous duty he was called to discharge at this great crisis in the history of the Church of Scotland, in the troublous times on which we had fallen.

The Lord Commissioner presented himself to the view of the assembled multitude a few minutes after—entering, as Dr. Welsh had done, from behind the throne. He was accompanied by the Lord Advocate, Duncan M'Neil, afterwards Lord Colonsay; the Lord Provost of the city, Sir James Forrest; the Sheriff of the county, Mr. Graham Speirs; the Commander of the Forces in Scotland, and a retinue of ladies and gentlemen. Every mark of respect was shown to His Grace in the body of the house and by the general audience.

The Moderator turned towards him and bowed. Then presenting himself to the assembly he proceeded to pray. The prayer was short, and pronounced with solemn tone of voice, its terms very appropriate to present circumstances and very affecting. All listened with profound attention. When he had concluded, a breathless silence ensued. No man knew what was to come. There might be interference in some form, boding good or boding evil—who could tell? All minds were strung to excess. After the shortest pause, with the firmest voice he had this day hitherto used, the Moderator announced that it was then his painful duty to PROTEST, for reasons set forth in the paper he held in his hand, against the Assembly proceeding to business as they had now met, there having occurred a violation of the terms of union between our Church and the State, through the action of the Courts of Law, sanctioned by the Government of the country, under circumstances which must needs render the constituting of the Assembly unlawful in view of the rules of the Church. He then read the PROTEST, subscribed, he announced, by 203 members, a legal majority of the whole Assembly. Having concluded, amidst deep stillness, he laid the document with considerable vivacity on the table; took up his hat, and at once left the chair, moving towards the egress from the Church to the left. He was

followed, at a pace's distance, by the occupants of the bench nearest the platform on the left, Dr. Chalmers, Dr. Cunningham, Dr. Candlish, Dr. M'Farlane, Dr. Guthrie, with other eminent men of the same class. It had been arranged that no expression of any kind should proceed from us, but that, in perfect quietness and in all order, we should take our departure. A member was stationed as sentry, at the foot of each pew, to secure that the occupants should not disturb the order, by issuing from the building until the due time for each came. Those nearest the door were thus the latest of getting into the street. It was one of Mr. Jeffrey's arrangements. Few were informed of it, so that not a few placed themselves near the door, in the back pews as already stated, expecting to make sure of early egress, only to be disappointed. In this predicament I found myself—chafed somewhat at first, but becoming reconciled to my lot when I saw that my disappointment gave occasion to the opportunity of witnessing for myself the incidents in the interior connected with the interesting scene passing before my eyes. Had I got away earlier I must have been indebted to the testimony of others for these.

My attention was, naturally, first drawn to the throne, and to the parties gathered round it. They were manifestly taken by surprise. When the departure of the ministers and elders had

lasted for about a minute, and when the audience in the galleries perceived its appointed order, the movement among them in all parts became general. The benches above began to empty themselves as calmly and resolutely as the benches in the area below. It looked as if all were about to quit, except the dark mass in the area to the right of the platform. Most clear it was that neither Commissioner, nor Government officials of any name, had foreseen or had calculated on the event they were now compelled to witness. Their dream that the agitation on the Church question was confined to a few restless and dissatisfied men, whom the Church could well want, was being rudely disturbed; and the truth was being uncomfortably forced on their unwilling convictions, that, as Scotland had in all previous times done, so now she was to prove true to her hereditary faith in Christ's crown rights, and to her hereditary loyalty to her divine Head and King. No common occurrence now presented itself to them. To those even who viewed it, and could view it, only in its political aspect and bearings, no common occurrence presented itself to their notice. The Government which could be guilty, through its officials in Scotland, of falling into so outrageous a mistake as to conclude that the appeals and the protestations of the Evangelical party in their "ten years' conflict," had been mere *talk*, or mere

management to gain sinister ends, could not be expected to retain, or to deserve to retain, the confidence of the kingdom either north or south of the Tweed. Miserably deceived they had been; but when such reasons existed why they should not have been so, how could they be excused for permitting themselves to be blinded, and to become the occasion of such a blot on their Sovereign's reign as the event now occurring involved? The present action of the General Assembly, and what had immediately preceded, could not, and would not, have been ventured on by the ministers and elders of which it was composed alone. These ministers and elders, indeed, were not aware of the extent to which they had influenced the mind of the country, and to which they were to be supported by the people. But they were fully aware, not only that their great principles were vital, essential, and at all hazards to be maintained; but likewise that the intelligence of Scotland held them to be so, and might surely be calculated on to stand by them. Friends of the Government, such as Bruce of Kennet, had pressed this on Sir Robert Peel, Sir James Graham, and Lord Aberdeen, but they ceased to listen. Principal M'Farlane had no confidence in the leaders of the pretended approaching Disruption, and this satisfied the Queen's ministers! So we had reason at the time to believe.

All who were placed around the Lord Commissioner started to their feet, as if to watch the exodus more minutely. The Lord Advocate, in ostentatious court costume, seemed to be greatly touched. His face became deadly pale, whilst every motion betrayed the nervous excitement under which he was labouring. This, however, did not last long; at least the appearance of self-possession was soon recovered. His Grace the Commissioner seemed overwhelmed. For a little he gazed in the direction of the departing throng of ministers and elders. Possessed of very defective power of sight, he appeared as if he could not comprehend what was taking place. At length, as if comprehending it, and appreciating the seriousness of the occasion to all concerned, and to himself as representing the Sovereign in particular, he bent his head down under the table that stood before him, desiring, as I thought, to prevent his being a witness of the scene. The Lord Advocate, on perceiving this attitude on the part of the Lord Commissioner, approached him, bent down, and whispered something. After a moment's pause, as acting on what had been suggested to him, he rose and left the house, followed by all his suite. The Lord Advocate and others remained, for a time observing the progress of matters. It was rumoured among us afterwards, that, acting as legal adviser of the crown, he had in this conjunc-

ture hinted to the Lord Commissioner, it might be better he, the representative of Her Majesty, should not *witness* the event then in progress.

The process of evacuation proceeded. The assemblage on the Commissioner's platform became sensibly attenuated. My eye fell on the Sheriff of the county, Mr. Graham Speirs, and the Lord Provost of the city, Sir James Forrest, who seemed lingering there to see the last of it. They retired together by the door at which His Grace had departed. They were both about to make their appearance elsewhere, but for which they might have been expected to await the issue of the exodus, and see what should come next. Others on the platform also moved away, of whom, that they should have remained was expected.

As for the *residuary* body (so they came to be denominated), a variety of expression was visible among them. A large portion looked on apparently with stolid indifference, if not with a sort of stupid look of triumphant satisfaction. These were the least intelligent ministers and elders, if they might be spoken of as at all *intelligent* with regard to the great controversy, so many years the occasion of disturbance in, and now the cause of breaking up, of the Establishment of which they formed a part. Many knew scarcely anything of the controversy, and were incapable of distinguishing one set of opinions from

the other. It cannot be counted severe to say so when such a man as the late Dr. Norman M'Leod seemed to glory in asserting that *he* could not understand what was meant by spiritual independence. No rational conviction of duty kept the class to whom I refer fixed in their position amidst the present change. To preserve the *status quo ante bellum*, there is no want of charity in believing, was a very main object with them—to keep possession at all hazards and under all contingencies of their stipends, their manses,—all temporal advantages connected with State pay and State protection. It need not be denied that we who forsook all these would not have done so could we have retained them with a good conscience —with liberty to discharge the duty we owed both to God and man on our view of the same, and that a stern necessity had compelled our action to be what it was.

Though the aspect of the mass who remained in St. Andrew's Church was what I have described, and the aspect likewise of some one or two of the prominent leaders among them, it was not so with the men of understanding, knowledge, and experience. I marked particularly the expression of Dr. Cook's face. Sorrow, disappointment, almost penitence, appeared to me depicted there. It was rumoured that he had counselled temperate measures, had recommended concessions

before the crisis came, or on its eve, and that little heed was given to him. He sat this day on one of the cross benches. As he watched the retiring of many whom he could not but in heart sincerely respect, his head dropped gradually till the chin rested on his breast, eyeing with a melancholy side look the rapidly emptying pews. I am confident that had Dr. Cook and others like minded then present been able to arrest the exodus—to retain the departing throng—they would have done it. Not that they would have adopted our principles, or ever have been heartily reconciled to them. They had gone too far in the opposite direction for that. But had the Government allowed our claims, and permitted liberty to the extent provided by the *Veto Law*, with entire freedom from the interference of courts of law in our administration of the affairs of the Church, Dr. Cook would not on that account have created any division or made any disruption—a course which would have influenced and guided all the *Moderates*, at least for the time. He had spoken during the discussions, and said that *his* party were safe whatever the issue might be, for they could remain in the Establishment and act there though our claims were fully granted; whilst nothing could secure us if those claims were not granted—we must go out. Rather than that this result should be realized, I believe that Dr. Cook and

some whom he represented would have yielded with the view of preserving the integrity of the Establishment. I am willing, I say, to believe that, when matters came to the position they had assumed by 18th May, 1843, Dr. Cook and others of his party, unprejudiced, intelligent, and honest enough coolly to forecast the future, would have consented to an accommodation which might have secured the desired integrity. But it was then too late. What might have satisfied us a year or two earlier would not do so now. The unrepealed decisions of courts of law (unrepealed till this day) would have made it utterly impossible. Besides which there was in the Establishment itself a party, though not so strong as that which Dr. Cook led, who in their blindness would have relentlessly opposed any attempt or proposal to concede anything. Of all the quiet, unmoved, and, perhaps, contented faces on the opposite side of the house on which my eyes fell none were more so than those of Principal M'Farlane of Glasgow and Dr. William Muir of Edinburgh.

The vacated benches began to be reoccupied. From the right-hand mass I have described there moved to the left, though slowly, some units. If the purpose had been to satirize the new Scottish Establishment, it could not have been more expressively done than by selecting to fill the vacancies on the left of the throne caused by the depar-

ture of Chalmers and his friends the men who of their own accord passed across the floor of the church with triumphant look and sat themselves down on the first benches—effigies of emptiness every one of them.

My turn to "move on," in obedience to Mr. Jeffrey's ordinance, at length came; our pew-sentry permitted me to go. As I approached the door of outlet, KENNET, who stood solitary in one of the empty benches near, with the saddest expression, indignation being predominant, came forward to me, and, deeply affected (the tear was in his eye), took me by the hand. "Farewell," I said, "my heaviest grief to-day is that you are not to be with us; may we yet hope to see you in our midst?" "However that may be, I shall not remain long here. If they accept the restoration by authority of the Court of Session, and without ecclesiastical action of their own, of the deposed Strathbogie ministers, I shall be done with them for ever." We parted for the time. KENNET carried out his purpose. As soon as he could get opportunity, he demanded to know the intention of the Assembly as to the deposed ministers in question. They had been deposed by the General Assembly for contumacy. This sentence the Court of Session had annulled, reponing in their ecclesiastical status all of them. This the ministers had accepted, and rejecting the authority of the Courts

of the Church, to which by their ordination vows they had sworn allegiance, they kept possession of their parishes with all their temporal privileges, exercising their ecclesiastical functions, as well purely by authority of the Civil court. Had the decree of the Court dealt only with the temporalities, we should have found no fault. What Mr. Bruce demanded to ascertain virtually was whether, now, the proceeding of the Civil court was to be homologated, and their decree, setting aside the action of the Church in the deposition of those men, to be ignored? The new Assembly made no difficulty about it. Erastianism, as gross as had ever existed in any nominal Church, was the order of the day. The Court of Session, they held, in annulling the spiritual sentence of deposition, did what by law they were entitled to do. No action on the part of the Church was required in the case. The ministers of Strathbogie were in full possession of all their clerical position already, and independently of such action, for the Civil court had declared the act of deposition to be contrary to law. Mr. Bruce, in some strong words, denounced this course, declared that he could not remain as a member of the Court, that he should never again be seen on the floor of the Assembly, and so took his leave. What he did besides I shall narrate afterwards. He kept his word. He did not join the Free

Church, though I had reason to know his heart was with us. He never more accepted a commission as Representative Elder, nor took part or interest in the proceedings of the Establishment. His son, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, has done so, and is now a member of their Assembly. Whether he has knowledge and intelligent understanding of the great principles that ought to reign in a Church of Christ, as his father had, I never have had opportunity of knowing. KENNET'S political relations I always charged with the fault of what I reluctantly call his defection. Mr. M'Micking, his friend, was quite as strong as he in his political beliefs and convictions. Sir Robert Peel's party had no more devoted adherent. Toryism was a very grave principle with both. But Mr. M'Micking became an earnest, devoted, persistent Free Churchman, holding office in my congregation for many years, representing our Presbytery in the Free Assembly, serving in our ranks the cause of truth in every competent form, until the end of his long and honourable life. That Mr. Bruce sympathized with us and helped us as he thought he might consistently with his views do, was shown in various ways; one being his authorizing me to announce, on one of our public days, a gift from him of £1000 in aid of our Sustentation Fund. His friendship for myself never changed. In my conversations with

him I never was left in doubt *which* Church was the object of interest with him, or how greatly he rejoiced in the progress of the *Free*.

On emerging into the street I found we were received with every token of approbation, kindness, and respect—a new thing for us. Every form of manifestation was employed to assure us of the feeling of favour with which our proceeding was viewed by the people. Within the walls of the church, when detained there, I had heard the distant and somewhat indistinct sound of cheering. I now found myself in the heart of it; very gratifying it was after all that had come and gone. Without police, without any functionary of the law, an avenue was kept open for the procession, as we walked along George Street, turning into Hanover Street, three abreast, arm-in-arm, onward to Tanfield. Dr. Forbes of Glasgow, the companion of my Perthshire tour of agitation, walked between me and another friend. He was full of confidence, but he had been disappointed in the result of our conflict. "If they (referring to Government) do not remedy this within a week, the Establishments in this kingdom are not worth ten years' purchase," he said. We all had strong convictions that the Establishments had received their death-blow by the action of the legislature. Forward we walked amidst greetings on all hands. These

proceeded from no rabble. Most orderly was our progress, as we advanced at regular intervals, rank after rank, and most orderly was the reception we met with from the well-dressed and respectable assemblage which lined our way. Besides friends of the city, many had come from the country, who swelled the numbers. Whilst the street-paths were thus occupied, the windows along the line of procession were filled with gaily-dressed observers, including some of the most distinguished of our country. It was from one of these windows Lord Jeffrey beheld the procession, when, moved to tears, he thanked God that his country could produce such faithfulness to principle as the event of this day presented to the eyes of all men, adding, that it made him proud of his country. At one of the windows my eye caught for an instant that of the Lord Advocate, who, having doffed his official dress, stood there witnessing the scene with disturbed expression of countenance. He withdrew when he saw that he was observed. At some points the gathering was larger than at others; but all the way to Tanfield it was great and the enthusiasm intense. The column of marchers was so prolonged, the multitudes welcoming them so great, one might have imagined the whole Assembly had hived off. The scene was imposing and affecting. I cannot describe what on the

occasion I felt. Who could have anticipated such an issue of our conflict with the Civil Powers, and such a demonstration as was being presented to the country? I marked no face that was not solemn, yet cheerful, hopeful. God was in our midst.

As I approached the bridge at Canonmills the crowd was very dense. Still, an avenue was kept open for us. There was no pressure and no symptom of turbulence. Respect, gratification, encouragement, might be read on every countenance. At intervals cheering arose, and our progress appeared to assume the character of an ovation. The Lord Provost drove to the gate of entrance in his official coach in all the splendour of Civic State. He came in that public form from the Assembly House, and the people assembled in the neighbourhood of our place of meeting did not fail to show their appreciation of his motive, of his testifying his adherence to the Free Church as the Church of Scotland, and in that to the principles that have ever distinguished the Church of Scotland. Sir James Forrest, during all his life, remained an earnest, liberal, consistent, and much-esteemed member and office-bearer of our ecclesiastical community.

The carriage of the Sheriff of the county drew up to the same gate of entrance at the same time. That it should do so, and that Mr. Speirs on this

day took the place he did, was a noble act on the part of a brave and virtuous man. During our whole conflict he had kept aloof; he had not mingled in the strife. Where his sympathies were we had no reason to doubt; but, being a judge, so circumstanced that he might be called on to exercise his judicial functions in causes connected with our conflict, he withheld himself, as he told me more than once, until the final issue came. Then, without taking into account how relations to his personal interests might be affected by his course, he withheld himself no longer. From the day of the Disruption, through the remaining years, all too few, of his valuable life, Sheriff Speirs proved to be one of the wisest of our counsellors, the most laborious and faithful of our office-bearers, one of the most generous of the contributors to the funds of our Church—honoured and trusted by all—an example of true patriotism, of uprightness and devotion to duty, in rendering to Cesar the things that were Cesar's, and unto God the things that were God's.

I entered the HALL by the doorway behind the platform, to the left of where the Moderator's chair was erected with accommodation for the notables of our number. This platform faced the expanse arranged and furnished for the accommodation of members of the house and the general public. On stepping on the elevated portion of

this floor, I had the whole place in view. Low-roofed, rafter-ceiled, constructed of the plainest materials, its ornamental furnishings owing their beauty and brilliancy to sized whitening and bright coloured calico, the hall nevertheless presented to the eye an imposing spectacle. The entire expanse —the 3000 sittings—were already all but fully occupied, so that for an instant I questioned whether I could find a place. Little if any distinction for the present was made between members of Assembly and those not so, or between ladies and gentlemen—all were welcomed as having equal rights, because having a common interest, and were indiscriminately gathered together. With one heart we rejoiced to contemplate our wives, our daughters, our sisters, our female friends of every relation interspersed among the black-coated and white neck-clothed brotherhood, sharing in the triumph of the hour, and glorying in the consummation with which they beheld our faithfulness crowned. Let the dubiety which to such an extent had prevailed be kept in mind; let it be considered that the utmost diligence had been used to foster suspicion, and that the evil purpose of enemies in this had, to a certain extent, succeeded; let it be remembered that up to the moment to which I am referring the problem, disruption or no disruption, and if disruption, what its magnitude should be, how many should stand true, had not been solved;

let these things be borne in mind, and further, that the friends who filled the Hall as we entered had not witnessed the proceedings in St. Andrew's Church, the scene on the route by which the procession had come, amidst the acclamations of the rejoicing multitude, for they had assembled early, judging that the most interesting sight of the day would be the arrival of those who should really come out and be separate, together with the opening of the first Free Assembly; let all this be kept in mind, and we shall understand how intense the anxiety and feeling of interest within the Hall at this juncture was. "They're out," "They're out," was the cry when we appeared on the street, emerging from St. Andrew's Church. "They're come," "They're come," was the cry which echoed throughout our unique Assembly House on the earliest arrivals there. Then, as one batch after another pressed into the place, the joy of friends who had preceded and come to welcome them, was unbounded. Peals of cheering arose at intervals, expressive of the universally prevalent sentiment. When any member noted in his own district, though possibly not much known in the metropolis, made his appearance on either side of the platform, to pass over into the place awaiting or reserved for him, those who knew him being from his region, immediately raised a cheer. This, though it might be feeble at first, soon swelled

into a hearty response from every part of the building, indicating that now we thoroughly trusted each other; that suspicion had vanished, that unbelieving mistrust had passed for ever. The comers were all recognized as true men, though they might not be personally known to all the audience. So when the note was struck at any point, it was without delay or hesitation responded to from every quarter. We had a grand illustration of "*rejoicing together*."

I soon caught the beaming eyes of my wife as she sat in eager attitude near the centre of the area allotted to members of the House With her sat Miss Elizabeth Speirs, sister of the Sheriff, and one of my Stirling flock, worthy of the name and worthy of the relationship to her distinguished brother—of character and a history, in her own sphere of opportunity, not inferior to his. Of their party was Mrs. Burd of Forthside, one of my flock too, an earnest, most conscientious adherent and friend of our cause. Of considerable wealth and property, Mrs. Burd was liberal as well as earnest. Though advanced in life, she became a Sustentation Fund collector, with the gravest sense of the duty both of giving and of collecting the gifts. She made no light matter of the latter. Some of the contributors in her beat lived in the country beyond the well known DRIP (one shilling) toll. As she drove her carriage, though when she

arrived at the toll she might have *walked* then to her contributors, she preferred, with a view to impress them with a sense of the importance of her work, to pay toll-due by driving to their houses, though the sums collected each month amounted only to a few pence. They all three sat together, an association very delightful to me to behold. They had succeeded in reserving a place for me among them. I sat down, under a sense of enjoyment such as I have seldom had. I was in full view of what was passing, on this wonderful day, within the extemporized structure which received us; whilst I had to answer questions, not expressed in displeasure or to give pain, such as: "What kept you so long?" "Was there anything wrong?" "We thought you would have been among the first." "We feared something had happened;" followed by my explanations, which proved quite satisfactory, that which they would have done, no doubt, even if they had not been so good as they were.

Our gathering was at last completed. And such a gathering! All available space was occupied. Heads innumerable, besides the entire persons within, appeared at every opening—at doors, at windows, at gratings—everywhere. And such a universal expression of sober, chastened, thankful satisfaction and delight! It was a season of what might be called ecstacy—such pure pleasure as attends a good conscience, a sense of God's

favour, and an assurance that He was crowning us with His loving-kindness. We were as men that dreamed. Our mouth was filled with laughter, our tongue with singing. The Lord had done great things for us, and we were GLAD.

After a little, quiet and calm took possession of all persons and of all things. The Moderator's platform was occupied by our most influential men, clerical and lay—very numerous they were. Dr. Welsh occupied the chair; *that* he did not as being moved into it, but as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, withdrawn in an orderly way from the unconstitutional and unlawful interference and oppression of the Civil power, here to hold its meetings and to prosecute its proper business. On his right and left were Dr. Chalmers, Dr. Patrick M'Farlane, with younger and some older men of mark. The clerks, Pitcairn and Clason, were there—clerks *pro tempore*—formally seated at their table, not yet named to their office by authority, though about to be. It seemed as if superhuman agency had been working for us, producing a change so great, a transition so pronounced, so harmonized in all its parts, so speedily effected, a movement so magnificent, so successful, so complete!

Dr. Welsh rose to prayer. I looked—he did not seem to be the man I had been watching and studying through the scenes of the previous part

of the day. His apparent stature, the apparent expansion of his person, the expression of his countenance, his voice, his attitude, all were different. He had been in bonds; he now was FREE. Liberty, in the highest sense, he had. His address—as he led our devotions—to the throne of God was all that we could have desired on an occasion so new, so solemn, so elevating; an occasion which inaugurated an era in which our country, the Church of Christ, and the nations of the earth were to pass through changes, for rapidity of development, for multiplicity, for importance, such as had never been surpassed in the history of the world. A sense of God's presence in our midst was common to all.

Chalmers was elected Moderator. He had been Moderator before, under the old order of things; he was now elected for the second time. When we quitted St. Andrew's Church, those whom we left behind us proceeded to discharge a similar duty for themselves. Principal M'Farlane, Glasgow, was *their* choice. He too had been in the chair under the old regime, and thus was elected Moderator for the second time. It was Dr. Chalmers with us and Principal M'Farlane with the Establishment—symbolic men—indicative of the positions we respectively occupied and desired to present to the observation of the country—types of the policy which might be expected from the

two communities severally. On the one hand we had a man who for nearly forty years had been the foremost amidst the blessed changes which had resulted from the revived religion of our beloved land; who had led in all these; who had been honoured for good at the hand of God as few men have been in any age of the Christian Church; who at this time stood prominent not only as the first of preachers and theologians, but as, among men of science, especially political economic science, an authority before whom others were willing to bow; in short, of whom it might be said, without exaggeration, that he was THE MAN of his time. On the other we had the most genuine representative of the old *Moderatism* which Scotland could at the time furnish—*Moderatism*, I admit, such as Dean Stanley admires, graced as his imagination and pleasant words might represent it—but *Moderatism* such as brought down to the dust the Scottish Establishment in all the time of its disastrous, spiritually disastrous, reign. With these two men to head the two communities, we were about to enter respectively on the course which should, in great measure, give character to the history of religion for years to come within our borders.

Chalmers was elected by acclamation. It was unmitigated joy to have him to place at the head of the first FREE ASSEMBLY. M'Farlane's eleva-

tion was not so universally acceptable. Bruce of Kennet manfully objected to his nomination, and in that form brought the *residuary* body to book. He objected on the ground that M'Farlane had held fellowship (united in acts of public worship, &c.) with the deposed ministers of Strathbogie, and so had disregarded and set at defiance the authority of the Church, bowing to the authority of the Civil courts in things spiritual. This was of course overruled. At a later stage KENNET protested against the Assembly's sustaining the commissions of the deposed ministers. His resistance being disregarded in both matters, he left the Assembly, after addressing them as I have already narrated.*

Chalmers opened our Assembly with *praise, prayer,* and *reading the Scripture*—a practice new, that has been continued ever since at all our Assembly openings. When he stood up to read the psalm a breathless silence reigned. It was the 43d Psalm, from the 3d verse to the close. The weather during the day had been fair and cool, yet the sky had been overcast. The clouds were high, and wore a leaden hue, producing depressing

* The formal decision by the Residuary Assembly as to the deposed ministers, the Veto Act, and the past interference with the Church generally, was passed on Monday, 22d, when implicit submission to the decrees of the Civil courts in all was accepted. There was slight opposition and a vote, but it amounted to little!

effects such as a state of the atmosphere of the kind usually does. At the moment when Chalmers read the words, "O send thy light forth and thy truth," the sun slowly but steadily broke through the cloudy canopy, and amidst his cheery shining on us down through those expansive roof-windows we sang our first song of praise in our FREE condition. All present were affected with the coincidence of sunshine and sweet singing at this auspicious moment. That the case was so—that we were so affected—illustrates the state of mind into which we had all been brought. We were waiting for God, for tokens of His presence and favour. To do this in any case is to love Him, as to wait for His coming again is to love His appearing. That there were loving hearts in the great gathering that day no man will question. Let men make what they will of the incident referred to, it was noted with happy interest at the time, and produced secret offering of praise in the hearts of hundreds. At six o'clock the Assembly adjourned till next day.

Dr. Buchanan of Glasgow was not among the first arrived at Tanfield Hall. He had waited in St. Andrew's Church, his object being to hear the Queen's letter read to the Assembly there. Next evening that letter was made by him the subject of one of the most brilliant of his many remarkable orations. His description of it, and his dissec-

tion of it, with the exposition of its bearing on the past in our eventful conflict and on the future of our history, gave relief to many minds. For we had feared the letter might prove a communication ensnaring to the irresolute and encouraging to any who might secretly desire an excuse for receding from the position to which we had advanced. This the letter proved not to be. It really was the fruit of ignorance and prejudice on the part of the Queen's advisers, and anything but what they ought to have made it—paternal in admonition or intelligent in instruction.

The Free Assembly separated for the time. The hospitality of Edinburgh never had been more abundantly employed than on this occasion, and the demands thereon, though cheerfully yielded, could not have been light. The evening of the 18th of May, 1843, was one on which was heard "the melody of joy and health" in the dwellings of many righteous within the precincts of the ancient city. As the Jews, in their deliverance in the days of Esther, had "joy and gladness, a feast and a good day," so had we when God now turned back our captivity.

As for me, I was one of a group—there were many such—conveyed away by a warm-hearted friend to partake of refreshment, and to enjoy repose from excitement, much needed at the close of such a day. Mrs. Burd, as I afterwards learned,

took charge of my wife. I saw her no more until we met, late in the evening, in the kind family in which we were guests. On retiring we narrated our respective adventures. My story was short and soon ended, the other was not quite so tame. When the two ladies had got away from the surging withdrawing assemblage, Mrs. Burd addressed her companion, "Noo, ye see, ma dear"—the good lady spoke the broadest Scotch, the pure Doric—appearing ill at ease when, on some high occasions, she attempted an Englified phraseology and an English accent—"Noo, ma dear, ye see, we maun saafe a' we can for the *Sustation* Fund (so she pronounced, and persisted in pronouncing, the term—a good abbreviation, by the way, of a clumsy word); come wi' me, I ken whare we can get a good denner that'll no cost much." She led the way to a pie-shop. The place was clean and respectable. They stood at the counter. Mrs Burd ordered two twopenny pies, one for each, and two glasses of porter, one for each. "Is it possible?" I asked. "It is—we were both hungry, the pies were excellent, and the beer no less so; it was my first Disruption dinner, and I trust I may never have worse." We enjoyed a hearty laugh; and many a time afterwards both partakers of this feast made merry on recalling the occasion. Mrs. Burd paid for all. Sixty pounds a year was her stated contribution to our great central fund.

Her contributions to all other funds for religious objects were on the same scale; but I question if at any time in bestowing, as she did cheerfully, these gifts, she had more enjoyment than in the exercise of the supposed self-denial practised in entertaining to dinner on the Disruption day, in the form she had done, herself and her minister's wife. "Did you not wish that I had been one of your party?" "No (after a pause), No, I cannot say I did."

To-morrow, Lord, is thine,
Lodged in thy sovereign hand;
And, if its sun arise and shine,
It shines by thy command.

SECTION VI.

Proceedings of Assembly, my concern therein—Peace and joy—Act of Separation and Deed of Demission—Dr. Guthrie on Voluntaryism—Arrangements as to preaching, two first Sabbaths—State of matters at Stirling—Corn Exchange there—Preparations—My arrival for Sabbath work—No longer an Established Church Minister—First Sabbath in new condition—Return to Edinburgh—Deputed to go to Inverness—Journey thither—Callander—Lochearnhead—Rob Roy's grave—Lawers—Bolfrax—Kenmore—Arrival at Inverness—State of matters—English Congregation—Difficulties—Dr. Rose, Mr. Clark, Mr. Donald Fraser, Kirkhill—Commencement of my work—Wesleyan Chapel—Bell's Institution—Mr. M'Rae, Knockbain—Effects—Success in gathering the Congregation—Organization—Preparations for building Church—Daviot—Dores—Schoolmaster—Scene—Dochfour—English Congregation, Inverness, formed—Foundation of new Church prepared—Difficulties in the future—Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel—Labours in neighbourhood of Inverness—Close of my work there.

I CONFINE myself in my narrative to matters in which I had a part—such part as was allotted to me in the proceedings of this General Assembly. I had signed the Protest as a member, returned by the Presbytery of Stirling before the Disruption, and I felt that, in Tanfield Hall, I was executing in faithfulness the commission I had received from that Presbytery—what I could not have done elsewhere—that here I represented the Presbytery of

Stirling according to what I believed to be their convictions of truth, and their desire that I should.

On Friday, the second day, devotional exercises occupied the time. I was asked to take part in these. This I did with much personal enjoyment, such as I have seldom had in public exercises of the kind. The evening of this day was principally given to the Irish Deputation. They had come from the Irish Presbyterian Church with a commission to the Assembly of the "Church of Scotland," and they announced, amidst the hearty plaudits of the vast assemblage, that they had found that venerable body in this Tanfield Hall!

The second day of our freedom was quite equal in interest and in popular enthusiasm to the first. The crowds attending were immense, and the excitement unbounded. The whole town seemed drawn to a spot which had scarcely ever before been heard of. The FREE Church Assembly was decidedly in the ascendant. This state of things continued during all our sittings, for the ten days and upwards during which they lasted. Indeed I may say that the same state of things has continued, year after year, unabated and unchanged. Till this time—now *thirty-four* years—the case is much as it was at the beginning. Changes have occurred that have thinned the ranks of the Disruption men, and have taken from us those who in 1843 dazzled and delighted assembled thou-

sands by their unparalleled eloquence, yet unto us the "gathering of the people" still continues to be. Old men of our Church think that the "children" who have appeared to fill the places of the "fathers," are not like the "fathers." Whether their opinion be right or no, the same unabated earnestness in attending our meetings is witnessed year after year, whilst the progress of our beloved Sion in all essentials ever grows, to the praise of the grace which has throughout crowned us with all our success.

I have referred to the eloquence—the power of speech—bestowed on our eminent men at this juncture. All were greatly impressed with this. We listened hour after hour, not merely to well pronounced speeches—these we had in great abundance—but to finished orations of the highest class, not the fruit of much preparation in the study, but the fruit of an inspiration apparently provided for the times on which we had fallen. I dare hardly exalt one more than another of the great men to whom I thus refer. Chalmers, of course, stood first. Being in the chair, his opportunities were not what others possessed for the time. His mighty power was not, however, wholly unemployed. But the effects produced by his utterances were all but equalled by those produced by the noble statements which came from Candlish, Cunningham, Buchanan of Glasgow, Gordon, Guth-

rie, Dunlop, Speirs, Earl Monteath, and others. The very depths of men's hearts were stirred. Faith had a rich reward.

Provisional Committees had been formed months previous to our separation, in anticipation of the approaching change. The results of their action were now brought out before the Church and country. The manner of doing this, as to the times chosen for making one revelation after another, and as to the men to make them, showed admirable skill and wisdom. Amidst general surprise and adoring thankfulness, we were thus introduced to the knowledge of a large fund collected for building churches; a considerable stated revenue for the support of ministers at home and missionaries abroad; the adherence of a large number of ministers of the Church, with an equal proportion of the probationers and of the students of divinity in the respective halls; the adherence of all the foreign missionaries, to a man; local agencies in full operation and great activity, in goodly numbers; with much more of the same kind. The Church seemed complete in all her equipments, wanting only some expansion and extension to be to our country at large, all that she had been in her best days. Highlands and Lowlands, very specially the former, were included in all the good we had to speak of, bestowed by Him who leads the blind by a way that they

knew not, and in paths that they have not known; through fire and through water, into a wealthy place, a city of habitation.

In short, our ship had got beyond the breakers and rocks, among which she had been labouring; she had got beyond them, though still within sound of their roar; she could contemplate them—now escaped from the dangers they involved; all hearts were filled with hope; and though we could not but forecast storms and privations which yet awaited us, to be encountered and endured, we had no longer the depressing experience that had weighed us down for ten years previously. Then shipwreck, with the disasters and distresses of shipwreck, were ever before our eyes, causing ceaseless agitations of heart and mind. Now all *that* was gone. God made us to feel that He had wrought for us a great deliverance. We were enabled to trust Him, that He would "bless us still." Previously there had been anxieties. When the change came, I could for myself declare, though reduced to a considerably diminished income, with a young and increasing family, that, comparatively, we were delivered from them all—we never more knew "care" as to domestic necessities. Throughout our borders it was so, and all rejoiced in their escape

"Post tot naufragia tutus."

On Monday evening the Assembly had under consideration the subject of the "Act of Separation and Deed of Demission," the right form in which we should complete our separation from the State, and resign all our temporalities into the hands of those to whom they belonged; or rather, those whose right to dispose of them, on their own responsibility, we did not question. Dr. Patrick M'Farlane presented the report of the Committee to which the question had been given in charge for consideration, of which he was Convener. He also made the motion that the adoption of the report should be recommended to the Assembly, to be carried into effect at the sederunt next day. The speech in support of the motion was able, striking, effective. Very forcibly and satisfactorily did Dr. M'Farlane demonstrate at what door the blame of the Disruption of the Church of Scotland lay—to whom that event was to be ascribed. Dr. Brewster of Craig seconded the motion. It was supported by Dr. Cunningham and myself, in speeches of considerable length—Dr. Cunningham's being spoken with such power, clearness, and effect, as he only could employ. Besides one or two smaller shares in the business of this first Assembly, spontaneously offered, I took no other part. I preferred to be an admiring listener, and at the same time hearty approver, of all that was spoken and done. One thing only had slightly jarred on

my feelings in all that we had passed through. I could have desired that in the noble opening address of our most honoured chairman, no allusion had been made of a kind that might seem discourteous to the, so called, "VOLUNTARIES." The object in making the allusion in question was praiseworthy, viz., that we should be guarded against the assumption on any hand, that by separating from the State we had abandoned our so called "Establishment principle." I held with Dr. Chalmers in all his convictions in that matter; but I felt a shade of regret, that, just at this time, any statement touching the question should be made. It did not appear to me to be *necessary*. On the evening of this day, sitting by Dr. Guthrie, I made to him a remark somewhat to that effect. He concurred with me, saying: "Ah! my friend, rest assured we shall change our views on that question. No Non-Established Church can long keep clear of what is called Voluntaryism. Thirty years will alter all our convictions."

Whilst matters were proceeding so joyously, so hopefully, so triumphantly, in Edinburgh, within our raftered receptacle, I was not neglectful of the interests of the cause at Stirling in my congregation. A prayer-meeting was held by them every evening, for seeking God in behalf of the Assembly. In view of this I kept up uninterrupted intercourse with my kirk session through its senior member. A letter

from me was read each evening to the meeting, during all the period of our sittings. The expectation of receiving information in this form from head-quarters, touching the progress there day after day, created much interest, and drew together large assemblages. The time of daily newspapers had not then come; so my practice was the more important and valuable. For thus the congregation was kept informed of details, so as to be fully abreast of what was being transacted. I endeavoured always to give my communications a hopeful complexion, being fully warranted so to do. Very good effects, as I subsequently experienced, were produced by this.

It had been agreed that we should all hold ourselves responsible for the supply of our respective pulpits on the first Lord's day after the Disruption, viz., 21st May. This was previous to our executing the Act of Separation and Deed of Demission; not that we should necessarily ourselves preach, but that we should supply service, personally if we chose, or by deputy if we chose. I did the latter, and instead of going home, preached on that day in Edinburgh. It was agreed, moreover, that on the Lord's day following—viz., on the 28th, all our pulpits should be vacated simultaneously; that then, and by such a step, preaching elsewhere, we should put to the trial our respective flocks, and ascertain, decisively, whether they

were to abide by their ministers who had preserved their integrity in the great conflict now ended, or whether they were to forsake *us*, and submissively await the arbitrary appointment of others who might be selected to fill our places.

It must be borne in mind that, whatever the manifestations on our behalf in Edinburgh had been for the days past, we had not, up to the date of our coming to town, seen any very marked evidence that adherence to us was to be great. There were many reasons to fear—a fact which had caused depression—that we should find ourselves but poorly supported when the crash came. In the face of such fear—formidable it was—we had gone forward. Thus the success in the metropolis had come upon us as a gigantic *surprise*. Our cry, in view of it, was, "What God hath wrought!" But how was the case to stand in the provinces?

On the Sabbath before I left home to attend the Assembly, I announced to the congregation that though the pulpit (of the North Church) would be supplied by me on the following Lord's day, the 21st, I should myself preach there no more. I embraced in my statement on the occasion a detailed account of the proceedings which had been taken to preserve, for the stipulated thirty years, the church built by themselves for their use; and I announced that these proceedings had failed. I was to go forth, accordingly, not

knowing where I should again meet for our usual worship as many as might adhere to my ministry and to the principles I represented; but I expressed the assurance I felt that God would provide a place for us, and show us His way.

Next morning witnessed a scene which attracted the attention of the town at large. From all quarters the people connected with our Church came to carry off their seat-cushions and their pew-books. This they did to such an extent that, when the operation was past, our beautiful House looked like a pillaged place—a place that had suffered sacrilege. This proceeding I had been informed of before I left home, and whilst in one view I was pained, in another I was filled with hope that things, in the end, might not prove so bad as hitherto they had looked—filled with hope that I might have a flock still committed to my charge by the Chief Shepherd.

At the time of the public canvass in 1842, the promised adherence, as I have already noted, was little above 200; of my large congregation these were all who committed themselves to abide by the Church in its disestablished condition, and by me as a disestablished minister. This was not comfortable at the time, and down through the months following, till the meeting of Assembly, I had no reason to take comfort from anything that occurred. Even the removal of cushions, books,

&c., when that took place, made little change in my expectations or forebodings. So moderate were my expectations that, in the communings of friends at the time as to the prospective provision requiring to be made for our public worship when the change came, I suggested our Infant School-room as a suitable refuge in the first instance. The Infant School we could legally claim and keep, though our Church, under which the school is situated, we could not. The Infant School, by good arrangement, might be made to accommodate some 200 or 300. I did not permit myself to anticipate a beginning, at least, of greater pretensions.

My views were not sympathized with by others —several friends who were true to me at this crisis and had heartily espoused our cause. They said little to me; but when I had gone off to Edinburgh, they took measures according to their own mind, acting on their own responsibility. I have pleasure in recording the names of the two leaders in this movement, so fraught with important issues to the community of Stirling and the neighbourhood. One of the names I have had occasion in this narrative already to mention, I mean that of Mr. Thomas M'Micking. The other is that of Mr. James Monteath, banker and writer in our old town, as friendly, wise, and judicious a man as I ever had the happiness to know. My

high estimate of Mr. M'Micking's character I have already indicated.

Every one who knows Stirling knows the CORN EXCHANGE. At the time of the Disruption it was but about four years old. Built by the town for the purpose which its name indicates, it was likewise used for public meetings of all kinds. The building forms an oblong square; the length being vastly beyond all proportion to the breadth. It is therefore a lengthy, narrow apartment—so lengthy that, even with good sight, a person at one extremity cannot recognize the features of a friend standing at the other extremity. At its erection, and for some years after, it was not floored; the natural soil formed the floor, being dry and comfortable. By the time or about the time to which I am now referring, the EXCHANGE had been floored throughout its whole length. It had likewise been fantastically decorated. The occasion of this was the presence at Stirling of the CALEDONIAN HUNT, and the prospect of vast assemblages from all parts of the kingdom—the prospect of balls, with other cognate county amusements, such as usually accompany carnivals of the kind. Ramsay of Barnton, a gay, pleasure-loving, popular, extensive neighbouring proprietor, well-known in his day, was the chief promoter of the change; his taste also guided the decorations of various kinds,

which made our Stirling mart unique among institutions for similar objects. The ceiling, which rises from side-walls some 15 feet high, unlike our Tanfield Hall, instead of being low is very lofty, ascending at an acute angle nearly 50 feet from the floor, terminating at its elevation in a narrow ridge. Along the whole extent, on each side of this ridge, the provision for lighting the building, in a line of narrow glazing, exists. The light coming in by the windows in question (if they may be so called) falls down on an extensive sloped ceiling, resting on the side-walls throughout the extent of the erection. This was adorned with very gay paintings, not in the style of a Michel Angelo, or a Rubens, or a Titian, but sufficiently brilliant and provokingly attractive; figures of huntsmen, with their bugle horns, archers, soldiers, cavaliers, highly-dressed ladies, horses, dogs, &c., all in brightest colouring, savouring strongly of the theatre; but producing a lively and not unpleasant effect. The EXCHANGE, under all that had been done for it, was really a handsome apartment. For size, if rightly furnished with seating, it might accommodate 1200 sitters. For acoustics, although when sparsely occupied a troublesome echo discovered itself, when well filled the echo disappeared. Some power of voice on the part of the speaker was required that he might be comfortably heard, but generally no great strain was

necessary. Such was the place which the two friends whom I have named, with some address, succeeded in hiring, at the rent of *ten shillings* a Sabbath, for the whole period of the tenant's lease, or for as long as it might be required. The arrangement, concealed until completed beyond recall, when made known, filled friends with delight, and others with surprise. Steps were at once taken to have a pulpit erected, with substantial plain seating. The time required for the execution of all that needed to be done was short; but where there are willing minds and active hands, even great difficulties disappear. I was to return to preach on the 28th, the *second* Assembly Sabbath, and the EXCHANGE *must* be ready!

Ready it was. When I arrived on the Saturday evening, on alighting from the coach at the foot of King Street I was met by a group of friends with the happiest faces—all altered in that respect from what had been. My welcome was more than hearty; the congratulations were unbounded. Then I must walk up to the Corn Exchange, and see what was going on there. The Corn Exchange! I secretly pondered. I accompanied them with a light step. The vast Hall, in all its shining beauty—it was a lovely summer eve—was, to some extent, furnished with new substantial moveable seating, backed, and fitted up with book-boards in a very ingenious way. The re-

maining portion was being planted with benches, chairs, forms, boxes, &c., borrowed for the time, which were being conveyed by all sorts of porters, of all ranks, young and old, male and female, rich and poor, and arranged in admirable order under the direction of a very skilful eye:—all was animation and delight, more like a holiday ploy than engrossment with a grave ecclesiastical effort. An upholsterer was engaged on the pulpit—new, bright in colour, being built of fresh-wrought Memel, with, of course, no paint—a neat erection. He was occupied covering the Bible-board, and the ridge all round, with green velvet, the gift of a lady who had sacrificed a good gown for this use. Everything looked happy. I was overwhelmed with thankfulness. But a shade passed over my mind. "What!" I said to the enthusiastic friends who were calling my attention to everything; "You don't expect all this space to be occupied to-morrow?" "Wait till you see," was the reply. With a full heart bidding them God-speed, I went to my home, and awaited the Sabbath with no common anxiety.

I was no longer a minister of the Established Church. Licensed by the Presbytery of Kintyre, my native Presbytery, on 7th February, 1821; called, within two months after, to the charge of a congregation (Oban), I now, on 28th May, 1843,

made an end of the relationship then formed. If there were advantages connected with my *status* as an Established Church minister, I could no longer lay claim to them. I had, under the force of circumstances, put them from me. I had done so because the liberty bestowed by Christ on his Church could no longer be enjoyed under the laws of my country, if I retained the connection with the State in which I had previously subsisted. I was free to abandon that connection; but I was not free to sacrifice the Christian privilege of spiritual liberty intrusted to me for preservation and for transmission to others as well. My liberty as to the former I used spontaneously, but, at the same time, under a compulsion which ought not to have occurred, the blame resting, not on those who yielded to it in obedience to conscience, but on those who had unnecessarily and ultroneously created it. That God has overruled all that happened at this crisis for the good of our country and the advancement of the truth—for which we ever give thanks—does not exonerate those who inflicted the evil, else Joseph's brethren behoved to be exonerated from blame in the matter of their conspiracy against their brother, their casting him into the pit, and, finally, selling him for money. The good Lord is ever to be praised that, by His grace, He gave such a triumph to conscience; and that mercifully

he preserved our Scottish Church from bringing on Christianity at large the dreadful stigma which would have rested on it—rejoicing the infidel and the ungodly—had she in the day of trial come short, and, for earthly considerations, parted with her glorious birthright. That she was made to "stand fast," whilst not a matter for which any man or class of men has a right to pride themselves, is nevertheless that for which all true friends of Christ cannot cease to give praise. There have not been many nobler triumphs of the power of conscience than was exhibited on the day when nearly 500 ministers signed the DEED OF DEMISSION after passing their ACT OF SEPARATION, and parted with all for conscience sake, and for the sake of the Lord of conscience. The painter of the great picture of the Disruption did wisely in choosing this incident as the prominent feature there.

My first Lord's-day as a disestablished minister was calculated to assure and encourage me. I think my heart that day must, in the first instance, have been more troubled than any of all those whose devotions I led, those to whom I ministered, and with whom I held Christian fellowship on this solemn occasion. My house at the time was in Mar Place, below, and facing the broad stair leading to the Castle Esplanade. To get to my extemporized place of worship I required to

descend by the streets leading from the old Gothic Churches on the hill—one of them for some years the place in which I had ministered. As I did so I could not but perceive that the Corn Exchange was for the time the object of attraction. The gathering of the people was clearly, as I thought, in that direction—not upwards in the direction of the East and West Churches on the hill, and not downwards to the North Church, vacated by its congregation as well as by its minister. No one had been provided to occupy his place for this day, and the doors, which for a little had been opened, were soon closed.

A room in the neighbourhood of the Exchange formed my vestry. Thence I issued, in gown and bands, to occupy the new pulpit. The Bible and Psalm-book, part of the furnishing of the North Church, was my personal property, having been presented by a friend, one who adhered to me through all changes. They were put in use, accordingly, on the present occasion. The beadle of the North Church had forsaken me; but the man whom I had desired to have to fill that office at the time this deserter was chosen, offered himself now. It was with a triumphant look that COLIN FERGUSON preceded me, carrying Bible and Psalm-book into the Exchange, and placed both on the cushion of the pulpit. Colin was a faithful and an intelligent man, greatly esteemed in the congregation of

which he continued beadle till his death, for nearly thirty years.

On entering the pulpit I found our place of meeting full to overflowing. To its extreme length it was occupied by a dense congregation of well-dressed people. The day was fine, and everything bore a cheerful aspect. All was new indeed. Though some faces were not known to me, as I cast my eye over the crowd, yet generally they were familiar, and, I imagined, welcomed me in my altered position. For a moment I was overcome. "I felt a lump in my throat." If I could judge I was not alone in this. Some at least were affected as I was. All was so different from what I had in unbelief feared. A moment's reflection brought the conviction to me, that here was no time to be unmanned, or to show it—no time for sentimentality—but rather a time for showing resolution, decision, joy. I succeeded in subduing the softness which for an instant I feared was coming over me. I read the psalm firmly, and with an emphasis which greatly helped to banish what, though it might be natural in the circumstances, was not to be indulged. The services in every part were lively and interesting. I felt greatly helped, with no difficulty, but much the opposite, in speaking. The deep attention given throughout inspired not only thankfulness but hope—hope that the Lord, the Spirit, was

using the word on the occasion for his own gracious ends, and to the glory of His name. I may state here, once for all, that this condition of things continued in all the time of our Corn Exchange experience. The attendance never fell off. We had made what in common language would be called "a good start." And this first Disruption Sabbath was a type, as it proved to be an earnest, of all the Sabbaths of my ministry in Stirling thereafter. Up till the last prosperity attended us outwardly the same as on this first day. God's presence continued to be much vouchsafed. His cause accordingly was advanced, and precious benefits through his abundant grace were bestowed on many.

My *forenoon* text was Isaiah xiv. 32—"What shall one then answer the messengers of the nations? That the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it." My *afternoon* text was Psalm lv. 22—"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee; he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."

After my work in Stirling, I went to *Doune* and preached there, returning to my home late in the evening. Next day I proceeded to Edinburgh and resumed my place in the General Assembly.

This Sabbath had been a day much to be remembered all over Scotland. About five hundred pulpits stood unoccupied. The ministers, whose

they had been, preached, but not in them. *That* they could do no longer and respect the law of the land; *that* they could do no longer and be faithful to their Lord and Master. They preached on the hill side, or on the sea-shore, or on the highway, or in such places as had, like mine, been prepared for their reception. There were many to hear them; many besides their usual flocks came—under whatever influence, they came and heard. Whilst a noble testimony was thus uplifted for truth, and for His honour whose leadings, in all our conflicts, we believed we had followed, a signal which should not have been disregarded was raised in sight of Christendom. The event referred to occurred in SCOTLAND—distinguished by her sufferings above all lands, for intelligent adherence to the crown rights of the Messiah, and for the liberties of His people; occurred in the case of the Church of Scotland when occupied in extending the privileges of the gospel in every direction, by efforts such as the country had never before witnessed; occurred by deliberate wanton coercion on the part of a Government priding itself on its conservatism of all things good and profitable to the State; and occurred in reckless disregard of earnest pleadings, that the hand of oppression should be stayed to preserve the integrity of one of the most extensively honoured of all the institutions of the kingdom. Had such an event as the casting out of 500

ministers from their charges, in the circumstances of the case, occurred under the despotic rule of some past tyrannical Governments of England, we might not have considered it to be so great a public token of anything special; but taking into account the time, the 19th century; the *Monarch Queen Victoria;* the statesmen at the helm, calm, considerate men, desiring to do right, well may all who wield their sceptres in trust from the KING OF KINGS hear His word—"Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; *be instructed* ye judges of the earth—kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way."

I need not put anything on record referring to this our first Free Assembly, more than the fact, that its vast popularity, the deep interest all its proceedings awakened, continued unabated to the end. It was a triumph throughout. At its close we all returned to the charge of our flocks, quite realizing that we had much that might be afflictive regarding these to encounter, but realizing no less that the era of harassing trouble under the terror of persecuting law processes was past, and that, casting such cares aside, we were free, without let, to prosecute our great and exalting vocation of proclaiming everywhere the glorious gospel of the grace of God.

To illustrate the amount of labour, in this

direction, to which the OUTED ministers were now called, in every part of the country, I may state, for myself, that until I was commissioned on temporary work from home, after preaching twice to my flock at Stirling, I went in the evening, Sabbath after Sabbath, to preach in the surrounding district, in *towns* such as Alloa, Bannockburn, Doune; and in rural districts such as Kincardine Moss, the environs of Dunblane, &c.—duty which, though involving much fatigue, was, nevertheless, joyous in no ordinary degree, from a sense of liberty, contrasted with previous bondage, and from a happy consciousness that it was work of faith and labour of love. The Sabbath-day services were supplemented by week-day services all over the country, these being occupied in addresses on public questions connected with the position we had assumed, in showing reason therefor, and consequently, in urging the duty of the people, of all the country, to unite with us.

I was not permitted to remain uninterruptedly at home for the summer. The emergencies of the Church required sacrifices to be made in that respect by some ministers and their congregations; so we could not expect to be exempted. The still chaotic condition of our congregations made it perilous to leave them. Necessity required that some should do so, however; and although the

anxieties for the present were considerable, the issue satisfied us that, as the homes of the warriors who went forth to battle for Israel of old were taken under special providential care, so we who gave ourselves to such a work as I now consented to undertake in behalf of the Church, suffered nothing at home thereby; whilst we were honoured to fulfil important ends in behalf of the good cause in those places to which we were commissioned.

At certain important points throughout the bounds of the Church, the ministers did not separate from the Establishment at the Disruption; but continued to adhere. This, to some extent, was the case at INVERNESS. All the *quoad sacra* ministers there joined the Free Church with their congregations, but the two ministers of the parochial charges did not. They both remained as they had been. They were the collegiate ministers of what was known as the ENGLISH congregation—a congregation intelligent, influential, and wealthy. Though the pastors had adopted this course, and though they were countenanced by the great bulk of their people, who abode by them, some of these were dissatisfied, separated themselves, and as was customary in all similar instances, made application to our Supreme court, or to the committee appointed by our Supreme court to deal with cases of the kind, for aid, in the shape of ministerial services. A very important part of the duty

which devolved on our leading men, after the Assembly of 1843, was making arrangements and appointments to meet the necessities of such cases. In this department Dr. Candlish held the highest place; deservedly so, for his knowledge, his most accurate conception of the condition of each locality from which the applications came, as well as for his wonderful acquaintance with the diversified gifts of almost all the ministers of our Church—enabling him, as with the eye of a prophet, to select the men suited to the service requiring to be accomplished in each case.

The case of the ENGLISH congregation at INVERNESS received ample consideration. The number who had separated, and who had made application for "supply" of ministerial service, was very small—a mere handful; and, at the outset, but little coherence existed among them, and not much enthusiasm; for never had separation from the Established Church been popular in the NORTH. The order for Inverness, in these circumstances, was three months' continuous preaching and effort, by three ministers—not officiating at the same time, but succeeding each other—a fresh man being thus provided for each succeeding month for the allotted term. It was hoped that by the end of that time the congregation might be prepared to choose a pastor. The ministers named for this duty were Mr. Beith of Stirling, Mr. Stewart of Cro-

marty, and Mr. Munro of Rutherglen. The first month (July, 1843) was mine, the second (August) was Mr. Stewart's, and the third (September) was Mr. Munro's. We were, of course, placed in communication with the local ecclesiastical authorities, with whom we were to consult and to co-operate.

I left Stirling on this commission on 27th June, accompanied by my wife, who was to be my travelling companion only for two stages, thereafter to return to our home.

Our first halt was at Callander, whither we journeyed by coach. As previously arranged, I preached there at two o'clock, in the open air, to a large gathering. I had reason to know afterwards that, through the Divine blessing, this service had its good fruit.

Here it rejoiced me to ascertain how all things went well with the friends who had, in the previous spring, attached themselves to the interests of the Free Church, when, as yet, the issue of our struggle had not come. Mr. M'Laren had proved a constant and munificent supporter, as well as a wise and considerate counsellor, ever since he joined them. Even at this early period in his career this singular man gave token of his future munificent support and patronage of our Church—a course by which he was distinguished till the end of his days. He did me the honour to make me his adviser in many things. No one knew better

—perhaps no one knew so well—the extent to which he carried, in his own modest and unique way, his liberality in aid of our many efforts. Very specially did he devote his means to the cause of education connected with our Church—in Scotland at large; above all in the Highlands, and especially in the two parishes of Balquhidder and Callander. The bursaries now enjoyed to so large an amount by students of divinity, as well as by candidates for the office of teachers, are an example of what I refer to; whilst the educational institution in the village of Callander, and the benefit of a similar kind conferred on his native parish of Balquhidder, constitute the local evidence of the large-heartedness towards all patriotic and Christian objects which adorned his life after God had touched his heart and made him His own till He took him home.

Having completed my work for the time at Callander, on this first day of my northern excursion, we took our way to Lochearnhead. It had been arranged that I should preach again, in course of the journey of the day, somewhere on the road. On arriving at Strathtyre friends met me to say that *there* they had resolved the service should be held. I found about a hundred Highlanders awaiting my arrival. Taking advantage of the shelter of a barn-door, by the roadside, I preached to them in their own tongue, evidently to their

great delight. The evening had become chilly, but our meeting had nothing of that character. I was affected by an incident in the course of the service. KENNET unexpectedly came along the highway driving in his carriage, accompanied by Mrs. Bruce—the first Mrs. Bruce. Our gathering attracted his attention. On perceiving me he stopped his carriage, and with his usual good-breeding and gentlemanly kindness stepped down, and, though he understood not one word of my speech, remained, hat in hand, for sometime listening, and then rejoined the carriage. I had not seen my friend since we shook hands on the floor of St. Andrew's Church on the day of our Disruption. He was on his way to his shooting-lodge, in some part of the wilds of Inverness-shire.

By ten o'clock, the wayside preaching past, we arrived at the inn, Lochearnhead. Mr. and Mrs. Bruce had arrived earlier, and, knowing that we should be coming after, they had kindly prepared for our comfort. In their company we passed an hour pleasantly; a religious service with the whole household—a household of high respectability—no inconsiderable assemblage, closed the labours of the day.

Next morning, accompanied by the village schoolmaster, a warm friend, I left my line of march to visit the Clachan of Balquhidder, where, close to the grave of Rob Roy, I addressed a large

concourse of Highlanders, who had been collected to hear me. It was a journey of *twelve* miles, but on coming back to Lochearnhead I preached again to a large audience in the school-house, using both Gaelic and English.

My visit to Rob Roy's country; my preaching almost standing on his gravestone, could not but recall the condition of this region at no very remote period—contrasting the present with the past; the time of the proclamation of "peace on earth and good-will to men," and the time which our modern poet sets before us when of it he says:—

"The good old rule
Sufficeth them; the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can."

Yet of ROB himself saying:—

"For thou, although with some wild thoughts,
Wild chieftain of a savage clan!
Hadst this to boast of; thou didst love
The *liberty* of man.

"And, had it been thy lot to live
With us who now behold the light,
Thou wouldst have nobly stirred thyself
And battled for the Right.

"For thou wert still the poor man's stay,
The poor man's heart, the poor man's hand;
And all the oppressed, who wanted strength,
Had thine at their command."

—*Wordsworth at Rob Roy's Grave.*

We were much refreshed after the service at Lochearnhead by a conversation with a pious woman in humble life, with whom we met, having called, by invitation, at her house. She narrated to me the deep interest which had been felt by the Godfearing people in that neighbourhood in the Church question during the progress of the discussions and law processes, especially as the time for the Disruption drew near. Their dread was that the Government might offer some half measure by which the ministers should be ensnared; and she spoke of the prayers which were offered up that they might stand true to their principles; and of the great joy which filled all hearts when the tidings reached their mountain wilds that nearly 500 ministers, faithful to the Church's only Lawgiver and King, had done so, and sacrificed "even all their living," that they might be free to serve Him. This spirit of loyalty to Christ was widely diffused there, and all over the Highlands, as it was also over all Scotland.

In these circumstances it was to be expected that Lochearnhead should become the seat of a Free Church congregation. It did so; and, after no great time, the congregation had its Church, its manse, its minister, standing forth a worthy example of the power of the love of truth in, it might be, ill-informed, but at the same time intelligent and devout minds.

My *travail* for the day was not yet over. By *seven* o'clock we were again on the road, urging our way through Glen Ogle, towards Killin, our purpose being to pass the night at Lawers Manse, several miles beyond that village, on the banks of Loch Tay. The journey was a long one, and the day was far spent. But the evening was charming, and the magnificent scenery of the desolate valley through which our route (the Queen's route) at starting lay; the sweet approach to Killin, and the enchanting lake, along the banks of which we drove, well repaid our toil, and ministered much pure satisfaction. A hearty welcome awaited us from the minister and his wife, although our visit came at an hour so unseasonable. He was an old friend, and we felt ourselves very much at home in his house.

An early departure from Lawers next morning brought us in good time to Bolfrax. It was now Thursday, the 29th, the Fast-day in the neighbouring parish of Kenmore, preparatory to their Communion. To Kenmore, accordingly, I went, and there preached twice in the open air on the beautiful banks, and in full view of Loch Tay, not far from the parish Church. In the evening I returned to Bolfrax, where, as guests of the hospitable family there, we passed the night.

It was but the third day since I had left Stirling, yet a considerable amount of work had been

accomplished with a willing mind and with a good and approving conscience, that which made all light and satisfactory. My wife had here come to the limit of her excursion. I was to have the comfort and happiness of her company no farther. Sorry to part with her, I proceeded from Aberfeldy to Ballynaluig, near Pitlochry, on the Highland road, where I intercepted the mail-coach for Inverness. I arrived at the UNION HOTEL there, much to my satisfaction, on Saturday morning, thankful that during a portion of the day at least, I should have opportunity, as I hoped, to gather my scattered thoughts, and to brace myself for the work on which I was to enter next morning.

A large proportion of the English-speaking population of Inverness were hostile to the Free Church. This arose from two causes:

First, Dr. Rose, the senior minister of the High Church, a man learned, cultivated, largely influential, and of much tact, had always opposed the reforming, or as he might consider them the revolutionizing efforts of the Evangelical party in the Established Church. He was a *Moderate* of the old school, the *beau-ideal* of a Scotch minister, as Dean Stanley would judge him—cold, dry, but wise and prudent; wise with the wisdom of the children of this world, as few men of his time and class were. All knew his *management*, and the

power which he thereby exerted; yet he never committed himself to any course of action that could be much challenged or made the occasion of suspicion or accusation to awaken public opinion against him. *That* he studiously, laudably, and successfully guarded against. On the other hand, he very dexterously took advantage of the mistakes of his Evangelical brethren in the Presbytery when they fell into them, often succeeding, in forms annoying to them, to put them in the wrong, and to set public opinion against them. His great local ecclesiastical antagonist was Mr. Donald Fraser, minister of Kirkhill (father of the present honoured Free Church minister there, and grandfather of Dr. Donald Fraser of London, and Mr. William Fraser of Edinburgh). Mr. Fraser was a man of high talent—talent far transcending that of Dr. Rose; a preacher of the very first merit and acceptability; possessed of great social influence, like the other, through his connection with several of the principal aristocratic families in the neighbourhood, as also because of the leading position in the Church which his *fathers* for some generations had held; but Mr. Fraser had no such indomitable command of temper as Dr. Rose; no such art; no such skill to gain the adherence even of those really on his side; in short, no such qualifications to be a leader of other men, as the situation required. He was too honest for it, too straightforward, too inde-

pendent, too impatient (though of most genial temper) of the infirmities of others, and too sanguine as to the effects of unadorned and unaided truth; therefore often meeting with defection of friends; defeats when advocating the best measures; and disappointments which, notwithstanding his quietude of manner, he did not always bear with the equanimity which, in the circumstances, might have been advantageous to his leadership. Dr. Rose, accordingly, though a poor preacher, was really the popular minister with the English portion of the population. He was the man whose wisdom was reverenced, and whose views were most adopted and followed.

The second cause of our weakness among the English population of Inverness was the character, conduct, and course of Mr. Clark, the colleague of Dr. Rose. Mr. Clark had been uniformly among the most advanced of the Evangelical party in our Established Church. He had been an anti-patronage man when few of us had got that length. His speeches in the General Assembly and at public meetings often filled whole columns of the newspapers, and were, from their very zealous tone, of the most stirring and refreshing description. In religious profession he went ahead of all his compeers in a land of the very highest profession. He was followed by a numberless host of admirers and half worshippers among the young

men, and among ladies, old and young, in town and country. To be a friend and an admirer of Mr. Clark was a passport which introduced one to the society of the pious in all the North—whilst to discredit him was looked upon as treason against Christianity itself. Yet Dr. Rose, it was believed, held Mr. Clark firmly in his grasp. He could, in the Presbytery, make him to be neutral in the most vital questions; and hostile, even, in those of much importance. Clark was vain to a degree. Vanity was his great infirmity. Rose flattered and fed it; whilst Fraser, on the other hand, sternly avoided such a course, appealed to his avowed principles, and addressed his conscience. Rose, in this competition, for the most part, carried the day. In small Presbyteries a single vote often turns the scale. It was a more popular thing in Inverness to be on Rose's side than on Fraser's; so Clark chose the former, whilst he was quite satisfied that in doing so he acted freely, nay, that in all he was Rose's educator—that he influenced and led him, and even secured to him his standing and popularity! So he became to all sensible people a very unsatisfactory representative of the Evangelical section, and brought thereon, in Inverness and the neighbourhood, much discredit. The sentiment thus referred to was not of recent origin. Mr. Clark's course in the Bible Society controversy some years pre-

viously had given rise to a prejudice which, through him, fastened itself on the religious school at the head of which he was held to be. He espoused the cause of the Earl Street Committee, and set himself in direct conflict with Dr. Andrew Thomson, doing battle with the great champion of Bible purity on the occasion of his visit in this cause to Inverness, only, as might be expected, to experience one of the most humiliating overthrows controversialist ever sustained.

On signs of danger approaching the "livings" of those who advocated the views he professed to hold, he cooled in his anti-patronage and Non-intrusion tirades; drew off from his former friends; wheeled; began to accuse, assail, and condemn them; and, finally, joined the ranks of their antagonists.

Poor Clark suffered the fate of all deserters, with scarcely any mitigation. The attacks directed against him came not only from those whom he had forsaken, but also from those to whom he had attached himself. What gave virulence to the former may be readily surmised. The reason for the latter was the desire, on the part of his new friends, not to appear capable of patronizing tergiversation so flagrant as that shown in his case. Hugh Miller, in his articles entitled "The Two Mr. Clarks," published in the *Witness* newspaper, put the copestone on the vituperation heaped on the victim of the passing tempest of indignation.

All those who knew him had the comfort of being able to assure themselves that no suffering to him ensued, but rather a self-complacent satisfaction arising from the thought, sometimes exultingly expressed by him, that he must be of importance in the great world—so much attention being bestowed on him!

The two congregations which had joined the Free Church were ministered to in English, but, as usual in Highland congregations, only at one diet of each Sabbath-day. In the Established Church, besides the two charges to which I have referred, there was a third, in which Gaelic only was preached. Mr. Clark preached, in both languages, in a new place of worship which had been provided for him. Dr. Rose preached in English only. If the Free Church were to maintain her position in the Capital of the North, it required, therefore, that we should have one charge in which English should be preached to the exclusion of the other tongue.

What I have thus stated explains how it happened that the beginnings of the English Free Church charge were of the smallest. Very few had forsaken the ministry of Dr. Rose. One reason for this was that they supposed or feared no provision was to be made for them elsewhere. It was to originate an arrangement for securing such provision; it was to afford opportunity to

all who desired to unite themselves to the Free Church to do so; it was to gather those who were in this doubtful condition into one with such as had already joined our standard, that I was sent to Inverness at this time, and that I was followed in the same work by the two accomplished ministers who, under a similar appointment as mine, carried forward the work which I was honoured to inaugurate.

Some of the adhering ministers in the town, I believe, conceived that a preferable arrangement would have been to have distributed the parties who had separated from the Established Church, or rather to have invited them to distribute themselves, among the existing places of worship. But this idea was distasteful to them, though it might seem presumptuous that so small a body should aim at forming a separate congregation; and it received no favour at the hands of our leading men, or of the impartial and judicious friends of the Free Church in this region. In their view the movement which was about to be entered on was a wise and a necessary one—which opinion the result, ere much time had passed, proved it to be.

My term of service at Inverness was, necessarily, one of great exertion, and yet it proved one of great enjoyment. The place which friends had provided for our Sabbath-day work was the

Wesleyan Chapel, at the head of Academy Street. This chapel was considered on all hands large enough; some surmised that less might suffice, although the accommodation afforded by it was not more than from 200 to 300. I went on the Saturday evening to see, and to satisfy myself. My examination of the edifice afforded me no encouragement, and produced no happy anticipation, whether I looked to its outward structure or to its internal arrangements.

When I came there next morning at the hour of worship I found, much to my surprise, the place filled to suffocation, many going away who could not get admittance. The weather was intensely hot. On ascending to the pulpit, I felt assured that ventilation had not been thought of. The galleries were uncomfortably near to the pulpit. As I preached with some animation I soon became drenched with perspiration. Some kind lady, seated in the front of the gallery on my left, at intervals showered over my person eau-de-Cologne so skilfully and so abundantly as to create a really refreshing atmosphere. The circumstance amused me. The afternoon service was after the same manner as that of the forenoon—the same crowding, the same heat, and the same kind visitations of eau-de-Cologne, now from both sides. The bedewing me with it must have been dexterously managed, as I never ascer-

tained that any one almost perceived it—certainly nobody shared in it except myself.

It was clear that the Wesleyan Chapel was not to be honoured to be the place in which the Inverness *English* Congregation of the Free Church was to be gathered. I at once made it my business to urge this on the leading men connected with the movement now happily begun. I was glad to find that they had, after the first Sabbath, come to the same conclusion, and that they were prepared to second my views. They were encouraged greatly, and withal surprised, by the experience of our first Sunday's proceedings. With great heartiness they set about acquiring a larger, a much larger, place for our meetings. Men of high character and of decided influence had joined themselves to us; I held with them the happiest intercourse on this and other matters. With us were Mr. Forbes of Culloden; Captain M'Intosh, brother of M'Intosh of Raigmore, a name well known in Inverness-shire and the North; Dr. Fraser, a hearty, kind, genial friend; Captain M'Kenzie; Mr. Wilson, banker; Mr. Robert Lumsden, now of Aberdeen, active, energetic, unwearied in his efforts to aid and to promote the good cause; Bailie M'Kenzie, along with others of the same stamp, and all of much local influence. Them I laboured to impress with the necessity of our not contenting ourselves with the limited accommoda-

tion of the Wesleyan Chapel, and of our procuring more extensive premises.

On the Monday, after preaching the preceding day in Inverness, I went to Knockbain, beyond Kessock ferry, to the west of Inverness, Mr. John M'Rae being at the time our minister there. It was the Communion season, and I had engaged to preach on the Monday. Mr. M'Rae I knew from long acquaintance, was well qualified, by his intelligence and good sense, to aid me by his counsel as to proceedings I should adopt, and persons in whom I might place confidence; friends with whom I must necessarily be associated during my present mission. He did help me as I desired, and in all my labours on this occasion he was much my companion, particularly in my week-day excursions to preach and to hold meetings in all parts of the country. This good and eminent man has recently passed away into the better country at a great age, after a long life of Christian effort, a much-honoured and successful ministry, prosecuted not in the Highlands only, but also in the Lowlands among Highlanders.

Besides prompting and guiding the effort to procure more suitable accommodation for the present evangelistic work, I began, without any delay, to move friends to the consideration of the more extended question of providing a permanent place of worship for the future congregation which,

I took for granted, as I sought to bring all to take for granted, was forthwith to appear. Morning and evening of every day of my first week I could make available for the effort, I devoted to canvassing those concerned, with a view to this object. Difficulties presented themselves. It had not been expected that such a prompt course of action should be adopted. Delay and a more "convenient season" when, for example, the congregation was fairly formed, was urged by some against my proposal that we should without any delay take steps towards beginning to build. I sought to assure them that their acceding to this would greatly favour the effort which was to be made, during the three months which had begun, to collect into one, and to organize the already declared and the expected adherents. Backed by the earnest supporters to whom I have referred, I succeeded within a few days in procuring a SITE for the future Church, in obtaining good subscriptions for building the fabric, and actually in having an architect set to work to prepare a plan and specifications. My first week produced this much fruit. It was to others, as to me, matter of no small surprise. It was especially matter of profound thankfulness to Him who has all hearts and all events in His hands. No man can tell how much important progress may be compressed into a single day, how much more into a single

week, in such a cause as I had in hand, or in any good cause, if he resolve to do the thing and to go through with it.

The services of my second Sabbath were, as formerly, held in the Wesleyan Chapel, under the same circumstances as on the previous Sabbath. But the murmuring as to these circumstances had become loud. So many were being disappointed in their efforts to get admission to the place of worship; public opinion had come to be so clearly expressed in favour of our movement that, after the second occasion, we met no more in the Wesleyan Chapel. An application to the authorities was successful in procuring the use of BELL'S INSTITUTION, in which we could have accommodation, as was calculated, at least double that which we had had in the chapel. In BELL'S INSTITUTION, accordingly, from that time, until they were accommodated in their own place of worship, the congregation continued to meet. There they found a most grateful temporary resting place. To the successful commencement of our enterprise this result, by God's blessing, was to be attributed. The ENGLISH Free Church congregation had, already, become a power in the Northern Metropolis.

In course of this second week, moreover, the plan and specifications for a Church, prepared during the previous one, were put into the hands of con-

tractors, so rapidly did we advance. The utmost life took possession of all interested. They seemed to themselves to be like men that dreamed.

Besides progress in this direction, the orderly organizing of the congregation was attended to. A sufficient number of elders, already ordained, was found among the adherents, for constituting a Kirk Session. They were formed into a Kirk Session, accordingly, in conformity to the laws of the Church. Deacons were elected and ordained by authority of the Kirk Session. Collectors for the Sustentation Fund, and for the other funds of the Church, were formally appointed; and they entered, at once, on the duties of their office. Books of record were provided, and there, a minute descriptive of our procedure was inserted, for the benefit of friends of the future. CULLODEN was one of those elected to the deaconship, an office which he accepted in the kindest way, from which he was, in subsequent years, advanced to the eldership. Indeed, the second week saw organization—though it might be in embryo—in such a degree of maturity as served all present purposes, and afforded a hopeful prospect of speedy permanent establishment.

In the middle of this week—not confining my labours to Inverness—I visited, in company with Mr. M'Rae, the parish of Daviot, to the east of Inverness, and beyond Culloden Moor. The

people there were prepared, as we understood, to call Mr. Archibald Cook of Inverness to be their minister. The visit was of interest to me as reminding me of another visit paid by me in 1842, as one of a Commission appointed by the General Assembly of that year, with a view to the settlement of a question which had begun to cause the Church anxiety and trouble. Mr. Andrew Gray of Perth was my co-commissioner. If our efforts did not succeed in effecting a settlement of the troubled question, they succeeded, at least, in vindicating the people of the parish from charges of various kinds, especially the charge that they refused to accept any nominee of the patron except the one man on whom they had set their hearts, whom they demanded to have as their minister. They would not refuse any man, we found, if they were satisfied of his qualification to minister to them the word of life—they did not desire to overrule the patron. The truth was, that they had got ahead of the times in which they lived. They were in heart and mind Free Church before the Free Church had existence. When it became the Church of the Highlands, and not till then, were they gratified in their desires. The "Daviot case" is a forgotten thing now, but it was important in its day, for the place it had in our conflict.

The change in circumstances between the past and the present affected me. In the Establishment,

the effort called for was one to secure the rights of the Christian people against the oppressive, though legal, order of things under which they were suffering; now there was no need of such effort to obtain, for a body so well qualified to use them, the rightful exercise of their scriptural privileges. Then we met in the Parish Church, which truly belonged to the *people;* now we met, excluded from the Church, in the open air. Then, though the gathering was large, only those who were both qualified and prepared to contend for what was due to them showed face; now the whole church-going population were present. Then, the intercourse, on both sides, was at the best an intellectual fencing-match, for the Commission was greatly distrusted; now, it was open, plain, friendly discussion. The people had come together to take the regular steps for calling the minister of their choice; Mr. M'Rae and I as their friends—a self-constituted commission, invited by them—were present to counsel and to guide them. The meeting was full of animation, satisfaction beaming in every face. Mr. M'Rae preached. When he concluded, I addressed the multitude—all the services were in Gaelic. One of the parishioners, a venerable-looking man, then rose, in midst of the Assembly, and proposed, with much humility of manner, but with great composure and self-possession, as one impressed with the solemnity of

the duty with which he had been intrusted, that the Presbytery should be applied to, and be invited to moderate in a call to Mr. Cook of Inverness, to be their future minister. The motion was duly seconded; then put to the meeting; and carried by acclamation. The expression of sentiment was unanimous and most cordial. They had long waited for Mr. Cook. Patronage could not afford to gratify them by appointing him. He now came to them by a better door of admission, and so became their much-respected pastor. For many years he continued to minister to a much-attached congregation. I need hardly add, that the people of the parish were "to a man" with him. In the place whence they had been expelled, where they and their fathers had worshipped, there were to be found none but the patron's minister, who drew the stipend—his schoolmaster, his precentor, and the inmates of his manse.

To still further illustrate the nature of the work to which I required to yield myself on this excursion, I narrate the procedure of the day which followed our *Daviot* day.

The parish of *Dores* is situated near the west end of *Lochness*. Thither, accompanied by Mr. M'Rae, I proceeded to hold a meeting, to instruct the people in our great Church question. Up to the period of our visit they had been wholly

ignorant of the merits of our Free Church movement. Their minister had been an Evangelical of the first water; but after his settlement at *Dores,* on his removal from Rothesay, he had fallen under the influence of Dr. Rose; had become a disciple and follower of Mr. Clark, in the Presbytery; and taken his place by his side before the Church and the world. He had not made known to his people—sequestered as they were—the progress of events in the Church. He had left them uninstructed, if he had not even been guilty of inducing among them false impressions of what had been occurring outside their world. This minister was now about to reap the fruit of his unwise conduct.

We assembled under shelter of a wood in the neighbourhood of the lake. The crowd attending was large. They were very attentive. All was new to them. I had intended to content myself in my address, which was delivered in Gaelic, with a plain statement of the vital and essential principles of truth for which, as a Church, the true Church of Scotland, we had contended, and which we had successfully vindicated—so intending to present to my eagerly listening audience, and pressing on them, the duty which became *them.* This plan I was pursuing in my speech, illustrating my several propositions by reference to facts in the history of our great conflict, which all

who were conversant with the subject knew. I was evidently making an impression, light was breaking in upon the minds of the hardy sons and daughters of this Highland gathering. They were moved—no one could doubt it; and there was reason to anticipate that we were to gain them to the Free Church—to her scriptural principles, and to the gospel as preached by all her ministers. We were not to succeed, however, without opposition. The parish *schoolmaster* was present, though the parish minister was not. The effect of my statement on him was not conviction, but anger and exasperation. I had not been cognizant of his presence, nor had I any knowledge of him. He either could not, or chose not to, restrain the expression of his emotions. Just as I had concluded a pointed statement, and illustrated it by reference to some event that had occurred in course of our controversy, the schoolmaster cried out: "You are deceiving the people, sir; you are stating what is not fact!" I paused for a moment, until I ascertained the character of my challenger. I then invited him in the best humour, but firmly, to come forward and maintain his charge. I said that "I cheerfully accepted the challenge, and that I was prepared to debate both points of the question he had raised—to maintain, against his accusation, my faithfulness to the people present, and my strict adherence to truth in the various

matters of fact I had adduced." The people became greatly excited. An ecclesiastical mob in the North never has been a small matter. It was natural for me to suppose that the local influence, in the person of the Parish Teacher, would be of such power as would overwhelm me, a stranger and unknown among them. Yet I was not sure, judging by the outward signs exhibited, that I was to become the victim of a popular outbreak. I expected that some impulsive person would give utterance to the feeling, whatever it might be, which was so evidently agitating all my hearers. It happened as I expected. A female voice, of great power, from the centre of the meeting suddenly addressed me:—"Don't mind him, sir," I heard in Gaelic, "Don't mind him; the Devil is in him; he is an enemy." The exclamation was endorsed by all the audience, evidenced by the mutterings to which they gave expression, and by the fierce looks they directed towards the schoolmaster, as he sat apart from them on a small knoll. I immediately took advantage of the favourable opportunity thus offered. I resumed my address, with a vigour which I had not previously shown. I selected some of the most notorious, as they were the most shameful, of the facts relating to the oppression which, in recent years, the Christian people of Scotland had, in various parts, endured. These facts I narrated

in detail; and, as I explained each of them, I looked towards my assailant, who sat opposite to me, a little to one side, in full view of the people, though apart from them, and demanded, that, before I went further, he should stand up and say whether I had, in that particular, made a faithful statement; and if I had not, that he should correct me, and show in what I had misstated anything. This I did in the case of each particular of my review—pausing for a reply, and making the pause somewhat awkwardly long for the schoolmaster. No reply was attempted. Discretion, he no doubt felt, was, in the circumstances, the better part of valour. My friend would have required more hardihood than most men are possessed of, had he ventured to reply. Our success was complete. Mr. M'Rae added a few pithy remarks to my lengthened oration. He appealed to all present—he appealed to their judgment, to their conscience, to their hearts; he declared in forcible terms, their duty to God, and took them bound to follow the truth. "You have heard the truth," he said, "this evening. You have heard an opponent attempt to contradict the statement of the truth, to whom full opportunity has been given, in your presence, to set forth, and to prove what *he* believes to be true. And you have seen that he has been as dumb as any of the dogs of Egypt." This allusion produced a great effect. The school-

master took himself off. The meeting was brought to a close.

Two results followed. The people, in the first place, became, from that hour, adherents of the Free Church—so a not unimportant congregation was added to us, and, secondly, the schoolmaster's fortune was made; for the story of our meeting got into the Inverness newspapers, not, certainly, by our reporting it—got into them in a form which we could not endorse, a form only slightly in accordance with what had actually occurred; and, as vacant parishes were at the time plenty as *hawberries* in a bad season, he was forthwith rewarded, for his brave and patriotic conduct, (he was a licentiate of the Established Church) by receiving a presentation—to the "*living*" of one of these—whilst another man served the spiritual cure. I have heard lately that by his conduct he soon challenged interference—interference through which he ceased to hold what he had acquired. He still lives, but is not in office.

Next day Mr. M'Rae and I preached at Dochfour, not far from the scene of this day's adventure, and, at the same time, addressed a large congregation, as in the other instance, on the Church question, for their instruction therein. Here we met with another schoolmaster, but a man of another spirit from our previous day's friend. Different from him, our Dochfour hearer joined

us; and afterwards became a minister of the Free Church—useful, and honoured, as he still is.

The work of this *second* week was brought to a close by my delivering an address to Mr. Cook's congregation at Inverness; by my aiding him in forming an association for the pecuniary objects which required to be attended to; and, finally, by my paying a visit at Culloden House—a place interesting as a relic of former times, as well as on account of its present proprietor, especially in his relations to our Church.

The return, each day of my rural excursions, was to Inverness; where, in the evenings, I laboured to push forward the arrangements which we had in view for the English Congregation. In this I certainly did not labour in vain. The progress was wonderful.

I may state, not to return to the matter, that my visits, in all directions, to country parts, continued until the close of my month. Thus I preached at *Maryburgh*, near Dingwall, Dr. M'Donald being my colleague for the day; at *Strathcrrick;* at *Kiltarlity,* in a wild sequestered region, at a spot lying contiguous to the boundary of the Parish of Urquhart, no dwelling-place of man being within many miles — chosen to give opportunity to the populations of the two parishes to assemble, with the least possible inconvenience to them. A very large multitude

met us. Services were conducted both by Mr. M'Rae and me. At the close of these we aided, by our counsel, the parishioners of Kiltarlity in making final arrangements in the matter of choosing and calling a minister, that which they soon after did.

It may be worthy to note, as a circumstance which at the time afforded me much gratification, and, though a small matter, yet a circumstance indicative of the feeling prevailing all over the land—that, in all my journeyings in every direction by the turnpike roads, having Inverness as the centre—obliged, as I was, to travel in hired conveyances,—the toll-keepers uniformly declined to receive toll from me! "No, no, sir," they used to say; "we know your errand. You are travelling on a great work for the public good—we charge you nothing for the use of the road."

The *third* Sabbath service was conducted in BELL'S INSTITUTION. A vast comfort to us all it was to be there, and to be no longer obliged to use the Wesleyan Chapel, which had been so kindly granted to us. We were able to breathe freely in our new place of meeting. There was no longer the use of the *eau-de-Cologne*—I presume because I did not appear so much to require refreshment in that form, and not because my lady hearers were less kind. But vastly more commodious than the Wesleyan Chapel though the

Institution was, such were the crowds which assembled to hear, that we felt greatly straitened for room even there. Nevertheless, though we very much regretted this circumstance, great encouragement in our enterprise was felt from witnessing the eagerness to hear—an evidence, as we took it, that prejudice against the Free Church among the class for whom, particularly, I had come to labour, had given way, and that the formation of an English congregation might be certainly calculated on. I may note that I did not confine myself to the INSTITUTION. In the evenings of the Sabbaths I preached, usually in Gaelic, to other Free Church congregations of the town.

In course of this week our efforts for the future of the new congregation gained great maturity. That the erection of the Church should, without delay, be proceeded with, was finally resolved on, and the preliminary steps required in view of that were taken. No untoward event occurred to interfere with our progress. There was most happy concurrence of sentiment. And before the close of my month I had the satisfaction of seeing the foundations of the Church dug out, some of the foundation-stones laid in their beds, and all preparations going on for pressing the work forward.

That in so brief a space progress so great in a matter so important to the cause of Evangelical

religion among the upper classes in this town, should have been effected, was marvellous. I could not but gratefully acknowledge, as I asked all who were associated with me in this work to acknowledge, that God had signally prospered our efforts—a fact, I urged upon them, we were bound to accept as a token of blessings which He had in store for the new congregation, blessings which that He might bestow them according to His Word, He would be inquired of by them all.

The building was in due time successfully completed. It was of humble pretensions, but for several years the congregation worshipped therein with considerable comfort. The structure subsequently reared, which superseded the first, was worthy of their social position—worthy of their rank, of their wealth, and their influence. It was no humble erection, but a structure, such as in its completed condition testified—as it will continue to testify—to the success of the English Free Church movement of 1843. God has signally favoured the congregation in the pastors He has sent them, including, among others, such men as the present minister of Marylebone, London, and Dr. Black, who now, so much to the satisfaction and profit of his people, fills the pulpit vacated by Dr. Fraser.

My *fourth* Sabbath in the INSTITUTION was

as great a success for our cause as the previous ones. After the service on this day I had all but finished the work of my mission. My concluding duty was to make the necessary appointments, so far as these rested with me, for the operations of my successors. With this view I visited Mr. Stewart at Cromarty, to whom I communicated in full detail all that, with friends, I had achieved. I at the same time proposed, for his approval, the programme of what I thought should still be aimed at to bring to a happy conclusion the work which so far had been accomplished. In him I had a willing and most efficient successor, a fellow-worker of rare qualifications in a cause in which we both felt sincere and profound interest. Mr. Munro, Mr. Stewart's successor, proved to be of one mind with us, and God was with him, as we both felt He had been with us. In short, the action of the leaders of our Church, in the appointments they had been guided to make for Inverness, had manifestly been acknowledged and blessed of the MASTER.

Dr. Rose was by no means indifferent to what was going on within his realm. I was assured that though, in the first instance, he sneered at the movement, no great time had passed when he became seriously alarmed. As for Mr. Clark, he affected sublime indifference throughout, in regard to all our procedure. My action had been so rapid

that Dr. Rose had been unable to oppose any serious obstacle. He was taken by surprise; and he became seriously disappointed by the adhesions to the Free Church which came to his knowledge. He had not anticipated that the things which actually occurred could possibly occur. But, awakened from the delusion under which he had for a time laboured, he soon set himself, if not to defeat the movement, to weaken, hinder, and neutralize it.

Mr. Stewart had to meet the difficulties and to endure the trial which sprang from this—that which I had not been called to do. One formidable difficulty he had to contend with. The Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, then a minister of the Church of England, and not as yet of the Baptist body, being on a visit to Mr. Baillie of Dochfour, his relative, was applied to and requested to preach in the Established English Inverness Church. It was a master-stroke on the part of Dr. Rose. Good Noel was led on, Sabbath after Sabbath, during Stewart's month, to preach in the High Church —Presbyterianism notwithstanding. Mr. Noel we may presume did not know why he was thus invited; and what ends he was thus employed to serve. That the invitation was not due to the love of evangelical truth, nor to desire for the preaching of evangelical doctrine, he might have been sure. No man knew our great question

better than Mr. Noel, whilst he was not ignorant of the relative positions of the religious parties in Scotland. His sympathies, too, were the very opposite of those of Dean Stanley. No one who heard, as I did, his famous Exeter Hall speech, delivered about a year after this time, in defence, vindication, and illustration of the principles for which the Free Church was struggling, would have thought that he should offer any interference to injuriously affect us in our present efforts in behalf of Inverness—of whose spiritual state he was not ignorant—or any interference that might be construed as intended to prop up *Moderatism* there, the character of which he well knew. His error, I believe, was an error of ignorance. I do not think he for a moment apprehended that he was virtually, for the time, employed in antagonism to the Free Church.

However that may be, he could have had no man so fitted to compete with him—if competition was to be forced on us—as Mr. Stewart. The congregation at BELL'S INSTITUTION, accordingly, though slightly affected, for the diet when Noel officiated in the High Church, was not permanently injured in any degree. It grew in strength every day during Mr. Stewart's time. It did not fall off in Mr. Munro's month, nor during all its subsequent history. Ultimately the Free High (English) Church of Inverness became, as it still

continues to be, one of the first-class congregations of our beloved Zion.

My work at Inverness for the present was finished. Though more than once invited to return, to serve temporarily the cause which had been so successfully originated, the demands on my time for efforts elsewhere forbade my doing so. But when the Assembly of our Church, in 1845, held its meeting there, I did return. Then, with Mr. Stewart, I visited the friends and associates of the time of effort and agitation, when, as might be excused, we together fought our battles over again—rejoicing as we recalled, which we were ready gratefully to do, the Divine favour so richly bestowed on us, as we believed, during the progress of our arduous undertaking.

"He lives who lives to God alone,
And all are dead beside;
For other source than God, is none
Whence life can be supplied."

SECTION VII.

Return to Stirling—Kingussie—Mr. Shepherd—Affairs at home—Efforts there—North Church—Severe conduct of minority of the Managers—Distrust of Civil Courts—Suffering wrong rather than plead for justice there—Case in illustration—Resolution by Congregation to build a new Church—Difficulties—overcome—Progress of the building—COMMUNION dispensed in the Corn Exchange—Opening of the first Free North Church—Description—Present Free North Church, built eight years after—CONCLUSION—Importance of the Annals of the Disruption, and of the Scottish Church generally—Relation to the Church Universal in the present times—Views of Dr. Chalmers—of Hugh Miller.

AFTER leaving Inverness I travelled by *Kingussie*, and arrived at Stirling in time to occupy my pulpit in the Corn Exchange there on the last Sabbath of July.

At Kingussie I tarried for a day. Mr. Shepherd was minister at the time—the first Disruption minister of that parish, as he had been the Establishment minister for several years previously. At his request I had stayed my journey home that I might preach to and address his people—so attempting something to strengthen his hands and to encourage him. This I did, addressing large assemblages, and using "both languages." I had reason to know afterwards that the work at Kin-

gussie on this occasion was not in vain. One of my elders at Stirling, many years after, received at these services his first impressions of a saving kind—impressions which issued in his genuine conversion to God.

Mr. Shepherd was a man of much value; not a striking preacher; not elaborate or learned in his discussion of the Word, but sound in his views, faithful, and earnest. Though not to be numbered among first-class *preachers*, he was one of first-class *pastors*. In this department of ministerial duty he was able, wise, and indefatigable. His talent for business was of a superior order. His character for prudence, skill, honesty, and conductive wisdom, stood very high. The consequence was that, in all this district,—in Strathspey including Laggan, on the one hand; and in Duthil including Grantown, on the other, he exercised a powerful and salutary influence. In short, he was really, for several years, bishop of an extensive diocese, doing single-handed, a vast amount of ministerial work, so earning for himself a good degree as a servant of the Lord Jesus in the gospel of His grace. In the year following, viz. in 1844, I laboured for a month (all the month of July) within this diocese under Mr. Shepherd's direction, in Strathspey, at Grantown, where I had my headquarters, at Duthil, and in all the country round. It does not belong to this chapter of my auto-

biography to narrate the events connected with this part of my Free Church efforts, succeeded as it was by another month of similar efforts in the Highlands, farther to the west and south. Should life be prolonged, should opportunity be given, and the prospect of serving a good end be afforded, this may be furnished at some future time.

I did not return to my flock and my home to enjoy quiet and repose. A work such as I had, so far, accomplished at Inverness, I found placed before me to accomplish at Stirling. By the time of my return all hope of the congregation of the North Church securing the use of that building —a building which they had reared at so recent a period, and which, after so heavy an outlay, they had possessed for less than a year, as already recorded in these pages, some reiteration in view of the circumstances, hard as they were, may be forgiven by the reader—had been extinguished. At this distance of time, and in the improved temper which now happily prevails on local ecclesiastical questions, it is difficult to realize the animosities which arose and asserted themselves in the times to which I am referring. Victory had declared on the side of our North Church opponents, and their cry relentlessly became, "No quarter!" The courts of law, in all causes, whatever their merits, gave sentence

against the proscribed ecclesiastical body of the country. So we believed, as we conceived on grounds but too well founded. This was often boldly taken advantage of. Though the Free Church managers (the majority) in the case of the North Church had no intention of litigating the question of their rights, and although this was formally intimated to the Established Church managers (the minority), yet we were served with an interdict, ostensibly to prevent our going into court, though they knew we did not intend to do so, or to use any legal action to preserve the building for ourselves, or exclude them, with such as might adhere to them, from possessing it. We did not appear to answer the interdict. It was far from our thoughts to become litigants in the Court of Session. Non-appearance involved us, however, in the law expenses connected with the serving of the interdict. We were thankful that no worse calamity in the matter overtook us. We knew that any feasible pretext for dragging us into court, which might easily have been devised by our present pursuers, must of necessity be dealt with by us as in the present case, dealt with by suffering such expense as might arise from our making no appearance in court to defend. It was a time when Justice, according to our impressions, had laid aside the band—the emblem of impartiality in judgment—from her

eyes, and when distinction of persons, unwarranted and cruel, guided her decisions. Cause of thankfulness it is that, in our country, only at rare intervals, has anything of this sort been known. But at the time to which I refer we had fallen on evil days. Another instance connected with the Presbytery of Stirling I may narrate for the instruction or amusement, as they may be pleased to receive it, of the present generation. A minister came from Ireland, shortly before the Disruption, who was scarcely known to us; indeed known only to one of the presbyters, and to him very slightly. He was disengaged. One of our congregations was at the time vacant. The people applied to the Presbytery to have this man sent to them to *supply* for a time. The Presbytery consented. Soon thereafter intelligence reached us by which we learned that we had fallen into a serious error in yielding to the request of the people. The Presbytery then simply gave the minister in question notice that his services should not be required beyond a given time. He at once betook himself to the inevitable Peterkin. In a trice each member of Presbytery was served with an interdict prohibiting our interference with this minister. We made no appearance to answer the interdict; expenses were given, and each of us was charged with the sum which fell to us respectively. We were ready to pay, but the money

was arrested in our hands by an agent for poor Peterkin's creditors. He helped to spoil us in this disastrous war, but he did not enrich himself.

The Corn Exchange congregation resolved to build themselves another Church. Soon after my return from Inverness, a meeting of the principal people was held, where the question was discussed. Much to my delight, and not a little to my surprise, the project was heartily agreed to, and ere we rose from our seats, £600 were subscribed as the commencement of our building fund.

This may seem to have been a very ordinary cause of gratification on my part. But the circumstances in which this resolution was taken must be considered. The debt resting on the building from which we had just been excluded, was one circumstance. The burden no doubt rested only on six of our number, but we were those from whom much aid, in another condition of things, would have been looked for. The loss of their subscriptions by those who had contributed to the building of the North Church—and they included almost all the congregation—was another circumstance. The prospect of a recurrence of the toil and moil, fresh in our minds, encountered in carrying through the erection of our abandoned structure, was still another circumstance. All combined naturally created a cloud which brooded darkly over us. It was therefore with a throbbing

heart I called the meeting, to consider the question of the new effort required on our part—the building of a new place of worship; so, also, it was with very special joy I received the hearty and unanimous resolution to *build*. On one point we all had a strong opinion—viz., that to *build* was better than to *litigate*. The sum which would suffice for erecting such a place as we resolved should, in the meantime, content us, would go but a short way in carrying on a "Plea" in the Court of Session, with the assurance that, in the end, we should have nothing but defeat and mortification for our reward.

Our purpose was to content ourselves with a very humble structure—nothing beyond what we could raise money to pay, off hand—nothing that would involve one pound of debt, indeed nothing beyond what £1000 would procure; an erection to accommodate a thousand sitters, at the rate of a pound a sitter. Immediate steps were taken to accomplish our purpose. Those who had opposed us were confounded. That, under such circumstances as I have detailed, we should venture on the course we had adopted, seemed very reckless. Some of them had it in their power, in some measure, to thwart us; from this cause we suffered not a little, especially I did.

To procure a suitable *site* for our building—suitable in itself; and suitable as meeting the

views of all interested, all who contributed their money for the work, was the primary effort in our undertaking. All desired, if it could be accomplished, that we should be in no close proximity to the fabric which we had recently occupied; yet our site must necessarily be found in the lower part of the town. The North Church had been built in that locality expressly for the accommodation of the congregation, to save them from the toil of ascending to the high parts of our city of habitation. This object we were bound to keep in view in our present effort. We succeeded, after great contendings, which need not be recorded, in securing the latter object—we obtained a site in the lower part of the town. But we did not succeed in securing the former, for the proximity to our former place of worship was as thorough as could be—we were compelled to accept the feu immediately contiguous to that which, some two or three years previously, I had obtained for the North Church. We could not help it. No other site in the least eligible could be found. Even in granting us this, hard measures were used with us. We were not permitted to build on a line with our old place of worship. We must erect our fabric at the lowest part of the feu, very considerably removed from the front of the street. A dwelling-house might be erected there, but not our Free Church. It did not occasion any grief

to accept this, so, for several years, the space in front of the *first* Free North toward the street, where the present Baptist Chapel stands, remained vacant.

On the 4th of September we began operations. The commencement of the erection of the first (Established) North Church, was inaugurated by an imposing masonic procession, including the public authorities, accompanied by all the folly connected with such histrionic pantomime. This, at the time, was much against the grain with me, but not conceiving that the sacrifice of any principle on my part was involved, I yielded, and took my share in the ceremony. Now we had no procession, and no formal public exhibition of any kind. All parties concerned were thoroughly purged of their taste for such demonstrations. The success of our undertaking, as we experienced, suffered nothing from the form in which we entered on it—bald though some thought the form to be.

Our progress was not so rapid as we had anticipated it would be, and as we earnestly desired it should be. Neither was it without disaster. In the end of October, when the walls were well up, on a night remarkable for a tempest of wind and rain, the gable at the lower extremity gave way and fell with a crash to the ground. We were cast down. A little time, however, saw this

disaster repaired. Another followed in the failure of our contractor, creating the necessity of fresh arrangements and new contracts. Both combined made it manifest that, not until late in the spring of the ensuing year, could we expect to have possession of our modest structure.

Meanwhile, we were well content with the Corn Exchange. That Refuge was filled to the doors Sabbath after Sabbath, and the happiest feeling prevailed. On the 3d day of December the Communion was dispensed—our first Communion in our non-established condition. All went comfortably. A sweet sense of the divine presence and of God's saving power was given. He did not hide his face, but made it to shine on us. My chief assistant, on the occasion, was Dr. Chas. J. Brown, of Edinburgh; he was in his happiest frame. Above 500 communicated. The tables being placed across the floor of the Exchange were necessarily short. Their number, in front of the pulpit, was as great as they could conveniently be made. But, withal, we had five services. We "kept the feast," many of us in the highest sense, realizing in our inmost experience that "even Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us." And thus, as to our local ecclesiastical arrangements, the year drew to its close, amidst songs in the night and amidst cheerful hope of the future day. A change had come. Our position was not what

it had in the past been. A new order of things had begun its course. I can say that we took well to it. Our congregation was composed of those who had previously been my flock with a few additions—additions which more than compensated the small number of defections connected with the change. I never had a larger congregation, except that to which I ministered during the years I occupied the pulpit of Hope Street Church in the city of Glasgow. Our removal from the Corn Exchange to the Church in Springbank Gardens, when that fabric was completed, made scarcely any alteration in our congregational condition—a remark which applies to other and future Church accommodation arrangements. Through them all, for more than thirty years after, during which I was minister of the Free North, it maintained its position as it does till the present time.

———

Though not belonging to the events proper to this chapter, I may here state that the first FREE North Church was opened by me, under very favourable circumstances, on the 2d Sabbath of April, 1844—exactly two years after the opening of the other North Church, and exactly one year after I had preached there for the last time, on the eve of the Disruption.

Our new place of worship was a lengthened square building—the breadth being in good proportion to the length. A series of broad stone steps, of the whole extent of the erection in its breadth, led up to the outer lobby, which was roomy, and of comfortable dimensions. A screen wall separated the lobby from the interior, the entrance to which was by two doors, one on each side. Passing through these, the whole area came full into view. The pulpit stood at the opposite extremity from the entrance doors. From the doors there was an easy descent, to near the platform on which the pulpit was erected —the very popular pulpit which had done such good service in the Corn Exchange. For some dozen pews in front of the pulpit the floor was level; thence, there was the gentle ascent which led to the doors. The side walls were not more than 15 feet high, and they contained no windows. The light came from a handsome clere story supported on iron pillars, in advance of the side walls towards the centre of the Church, about 12 feet. Close to these pillars the passages, by which the congregation approached and took possession of, their pews, ran. The pews thus were divided into four compartments—one on each side of the Church within the pillars to the side walls, under the sloped ceiling reaching to the clere story; and two in the centre area—the latter being of greater length

and more commodious. The whole interior was made very gay by papering which represented marble in massive blocks, each block clearly defined from the other. This paper was the gift of Mr. William M'Crie of Edinburgh, whose praise was in all our Free Churches at this period, for his generous liberality. Outside, the building was of the plainest—common ruble work, with the exception of the front, which was constructed of freestone polished, the design showing a chaste taste. The only place of worship resembling ours, is the Free Church at Old Kilpatrick. The architect was the same in both cases. Hence their resemblance to each other.

In this building, I may add, we worshipped for eight years. It had cost little to erect it, and it cost little to maintain it. Every *necessary* accommodation for our purpose it furnished. Over the outer lobby we had a good session-hall, to which we ascended by a stair on the west side. Behind the pulpit, in an outside erection, we had our vestry, large enough to hold a table and chair. On the east side, opposite the stair leading to the session-hall, and on the same level, we had our heating apparatus, of much use during the winter months. All this cost little more than the money we had originally calculated on—about *one thousand pounds*—and gave good accommodation for a thousand sitters.

I have been thus particular in the description of the first Free Church built in Stirling for the information of those who may not know the early history of our great movement. All our original places of worship, with few exceptions, were mean in their appearance. The "Canonmills plan," as it was called, was very generally adopted. In some parts of the country places built after that model may yet be seen. For the most part they have passed away; they have given place to structures which everywhere attract the attention and secure the admiration of all passers-by. Objections were made against the first style of Churches, once in Dr. Guthrie's presence—it was said they are not "genteel enough looking for Free Church people." "Give *us* the Churches," he answered, speaking for the ministers,—"Give *us* the Churches; we'll make them genteel."

A change in due time came over the spirit of our Church's dream in this matter. Stirling was no exception. The people of my congregation—many of them—began to grow rich, and to build themselves handsome mansions. The sentiment which awakened David's conscience and inflamed his heart began to assert itself among us. He was made to feel the incongruity of his dwelling in a house of cedar, whilst the ark had curtains only as its house. We were made to feel the incongruity of dwelling in our stately houses,

whilst we worshipped in such an erection as our first Church was. "Let us have a Church like our dwelling-houses—a Church consistent in its form and value with them—a Church like the congregation," became the cry. It issued in a hearty response. The present most beautiful Free North Church testifies to the taste as well as liberality which presided over all the proceedings which led to its ultimate completion as it now stands. Eight years after we had taken possession of our first Church bearing the same name, the successor of the Corn Exchange, we transferred ourselves, with much thankfulness to God, to the place where we have continued to worship ever since.*

I have finished my story. When other ministers have told theirs—ministers who passed through the times to which I have confined my statements and did work of the same kind—we shall have furnished for this generation such "Annals of the Disruption" as may to them prove advantageous as they ought to be interesting.

* I have at all times been forward to acknowledge my special obligations in this work to the late esteemed Mr. William Drummond.

CONCLUSION.

ANNALS OF THE DISRUPTION, with the subsequent history, including the history of other non-established bodies in Scotland,—the Scottish Churches generally, ought to have a solemn interest in the times in which we live. Good and able men in these kingdoms, and not in Great Britain only, but over all Christendom, are filled with unhappy anticipation whilst they contemplate approaching changes in the disestablishment and disendowment of the Churches of which they are the loving as well as living friends. When this comes they believe it will produce irremediable evil. Holding that deprivation of State favour and State endowment will make an end of *national* religion, will cast the *kingdoms* down from the high place they have so long and so honourably filled, as upholding a testimony for Christ and His cause, they tremble. But can this be a reasonable dread? Is it not the fruit of ignorance, and of cherished prejudice? Is it not the outcome of the leaven of the mystery of iniquity which from Rome has invaded, permeated, and polluted all the Churches in all lands? Is not God now dispelling the darkness and banishing the night-

born terrors which brood over so many minds? Has He not provided in these days, when the great crisis is manifestly drawing near, evidence that testifies against, and rebukes, the folly of such fears? May not the history of the Scottish Church be that evidence? That history seems certainly to shed the bright beams of a joyous light over the face of the dark waters which look so troubled to the unexperienced, the uninstructed, the doubting. It speaks the language of blessed hope; it utters the accents of encouragement and comfort. Change, as I at present speak of it, when it comes, if it be death accompanied with the terrors of death, will be such a death as shall be swallowed up in victory. The Church will then be Christ's own—no longer to be held in the embrace of his adversary. Divested of all tokens of past degradation from her unnatural alliance, she will become, to all spiritual and heavenly intents and effects, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

That the good men of the Established Churches, here and elsewhere, will, in the end, come to see, to believe, and to act on this, we may be thoroughly persuaded. When the crisis actually arrives there will be a wonderful disenchantment. Clergy and laity will open their eyes to the truth that they have been trusting to a strength which is illusory, and have hitherto mistrusted a strength

which never fails those who accept it. They will find out the secret of true ecclesiastical power, and will rejoice in the discovery. Then will come the day of their genuine prosperity. Then each of the Churches having "loosened herself from the bands of her neck" will "arise and shake herself from the dust, and put on her beautiful garments," and break forth in the song of triumph, "Thy God reigneth." The day of deliverance will be the day of victory and joy!

The present experience of the Establishments north and south of the Tweed affords affecting illustration of the felt need of deliverance of the character to which I have referred. To aggrieved conscience, and a growing sense thereof, we must ascribe the nervous, restless efforts to have it declared, by fresh legislation, ever solicited, that the liberty which they know and feel is essential to the body of Christ is possessed by them, or, if it be not, that Law should make it so.

If the honest seekers of that which they may know they have not, but know also they ought to have, directed their attention to the history of the Scottish Free Churches, they would learn that, following in their present course, they are labouring in vain, and spending their strength for nought and in vain. And if they studied that history, more especially for the present time the

history of what preceded and what followed 18th May, 1843, they might discover what He "who ruleth over the kingdom of men" would have them to adopt amidst the agitations which now prevail, and which can have no solution but what will consist with truth and righteousness as the "more excellent way."

It may by some be deemed presumptuous to hold that the Scottish Free Churches in their entire history; their contending for vital truth; their vindication of that truth in all its parts, in a form and to an extent never furnished in the history of any other Church; their separations from State connection; their manifest success in their disestablished condition, as to their financial condition and provision for the ministry; their spiritual and social progress; their missionary zeal and progress, with their self-government and their laws, the fruit of that government, in all their detail—that these churches should be God's provided "pattern," set forth before the world in view of these times of great change in ecclesiastical matters; but is it really presumptuous? May we not reasonably believe that, for the present time, and for what may be connected with the present time, God has provided an outstanding example, an illustration, a beacon, for the guidance of perplexed humanity, seeking to know the truth in

its most vital interests? I believe that He has; that in our beloved land He has done so. In support of this view I quote the following passage from Dr. Chalmers. The thing I thus venture to propound is no new thought:—

"We recollect an infidel jest of Voltaire's," Dr. Chalmers says in his Scripture Readings, "on the insignificance of the district of Judea—from whence he would insinuate how unlikely it is that a place so limited should have been the theatre of transactions and events which, if authentic, are far the most important that ever took place for the destinies of our species. There is something in our view highly unphilosophical in such an observation—as if the same play of essential interests and feelings, and the same manifestation of high principle, the same lessons, the same moral could not be as effectually exhibited within the limits of a narrow as within those of the widest materialism. There is no country which, apart from revelation, has done more for the civilization of our race, than ancient Greece; yet look to the smallness of its territory, and see how all that is greatest and most imposing in secular history was condensed there within a space far more contracted than was the land of Judea or the kingdom of SCOTLAND, which last may, *in her Church contests, and by the doings of her Church,* give forth lessons

which may influentially and most importantly *tell through the whole of Christendom.*"

"The most brilliant incidents which take place in the political world, as results of diplomacy or war, are transient and inoperative in their effects, as compared with those slow and noiseless revolutions, which, sending their roots into the deep founded stratum of opinion, grow rather like vast oaks than break out like sudden tempests, and increase age after age in their permanency of hold and extent of spread, maugre the storms and inundations raised against them by antagonistic power."
—*Hugh Miller.*

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